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AND China Overland Trade Report.

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ARRIVAL OF MAHS

The English Mail of the 11th Dec., and the parcel mail closed in London for despatch by the all sea route on the 2nd Dec., and for despatch overland on the 9th Dec., arrived per s.s. *Delhi*, on the 6th inst.

FAR EASTERN NEWS.

Vladivostok was completely frozen in on the 24th ult.

A scheme has been formulated by the Grand Council at Peking with the assistance of the Board of War for the unifying of all the military forces of the Empire, the Regent being Commander-in-Chief.

To "speed away" 1908, and to "welcome" 1909, the Members of the Amoy Club gave, on the 31st December, a Fancy Dress Ball at the Club Theatre, which the *Amoy Gazette* describes as a huge success.

A young Hollander in Java, Mr. F. C. Dons, is reported to have made a new flying machine, easily handled by one man, 30 by 11m, which turns easily, makes 300 km. per hour, and has a carrying capacity of 4,500 kilos. He is forming a syndicate, with the assistance of Mr. G. van Det of Hilversum.

The Regent has ordered the Grand Council to again send despatches to the various Provincial authorities, urging them to submit proposals in connection with the abolition of the eight banner regiments during the present Chinese year.

The Korean Emperor has announced his intention to visit Fusan and other places. His Majesty will be accompanied by Prince Ito, the Resident. This imperial journey will constitute an unprecedented event in Korean history.

Soiled paper currency, retired from circulation on accounts of its condition, representing a value of three million pesos, was burnt at Manila a few days ago in presence of the Governor-General, the insular treasurer, and the insular auditor.

An earthquake fund to assist the sufferers in Italy is being raised in Japan on the initiative of the newspapers. Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress have wired condolences, and have also forwarded a contribution of Yen 10,000.

Sir Alexander Hosie, C.M.G., the British Commercial Attaché, has been gazetted as Consul-General at Tientsin in succession to Mr. Hopkins, who has retired, but it will probably be some time before Sir Alexander takes over the duties of the Consulate.

British capital, a St. Petersburg dispatch says, continues to pour into Siberia in a remarkable way. The latest announcement is that the famous goldfields on the Altai have been sold to a British syndicate, which has also acquired goldfields on the River Lena and mining concessions in Saghalien.

Mr. Miles W. Lampson, of the Foreign Office, who came out as Secretary to H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught's Special Mission to invest the Emperor of Japan with the Order of the Garter, has now returned to Japan to assume the position of Second Secretary to the British Embassy.

A municipal tax of two piastres imposed at Saigon upon all natives earning their livelihood there evokes strong opposition. A Saigon journal declares that it will inevitably result on the one hand in an exodus from the town, and on the other it will keep away a large number of natives having business at Saigon.

Mr. J. C. Farrow, manager of the China Mutual Insurance Company at Amoy, shot himself at 2.30 p.m. on the 5th inst. [Mr. Farrow was one of the most successful agents of the company and was very popular in Amoy where he has been for several years. He was about 38 years of age and is survived by a widow.]

Grand Secretary Chang Chih-tung, who is also Comptroller-General of the Affairs of the Ministry of Education, has issued a circular to the Viceroy and Governors of provinces to dismiss summarily any foreign teacher in the Government schools who may in any way misbehave himself, or act unreasonably towards the scholars.

The Ministry of Finance has denounced to the Throne a second class secretary of the Department, Kuei Yin, for asking for extended leave of absence on flimsy pretexts, as it has been discovered that the accused official is using his leave to continue his opium smoking habit. As a punishment for this, Kuei Yin has been ordered to resign.

His Highness Prince Ching has been appointed by the Prince Regent to superintend the construction and repair work of the Ta Chêng-yü Mausoleum; where the remains of the late Emperor Kuang Hsi are to rest. The Mausoleum in question has been in process of construction for many years in preparation for the Imperial occupant.

The new Portuguese newspaper *Vida Nova* ("New Life") which has made its appearance in Macao promises to meet with great acceptance among the Portuguese community in Hongkong as well as in Macao. The articles in the first number are well written and give expression to views concerning the colony which are widely entertained. Macao has now two newspapers after being without any for quite a long time.

We have been hearing so much about a reform of the Chinese currency during the past twelve months, and seeing so little of any actual results that one is almost tired of reading of the Chinese Government "proposals." But the latest is worth noting. We are indebted to a Peking contemporary for the information that "the Government proposes to endeavour to institute a gold-currency next year." It has been suggested by an official that 15 Chinese half-tael coins should equal one pound sterling.

Sweden, the *Times* Peking correspondent states, will not ratify the treaty of friendship and commerce with China signed in Peking on July 2, on the ground that the text as signed diverges too widely from the Swedish draft first presented for negotiation. As announced at the time, the terms of the treaty were more favourable to China than the stipulations of previous treaties, especially in emphasizing the reciprocal nature of the agreement and the equality of the two high contracting parties.

The mail brings us the news of the death of two old residents, says the *Shanghai Mercury*. Mr. Wm. Morrison Harvie and Mr. Charles Lyall Grant. Mr. Grant many will remember as a partner in the firm of Messrs. Adamson, Bell & Co. from the sixties to 1890 when the firm closed its doors. He was well known in other parts in China where he has still many old friends who will regret to hear of his demise. Mr. Wm. Morrison Harvie was well known in the nineties as an importing and commission agent here and in Hongkong.

On the 4th ult., at a meeting in Berlin of the Executive Committee of the German Colonial Society, under the presidency of Duke John Albert of Mecklenburg, Admiral von Tirpitz, Minister of Marine, announced that the Government intended to establish at Kian-chau a high school for Chinese, at a cost of 600,000 marks (£30,000) with a recurrent expenditure of 150,000 marks (£7,500) per annum. The Minister stated that the view prevailed in China that a thorough reform of the school system was a necessary preliminary to the modernisation of the State's methods of government. The Chinese Government had shown its sympathy with the project by expressing its readiness to support the new school both by a subsidy and by the provision of suitable scholars, and also by admitting scholars from the German school to State examinations and to posts under the Chinese Government. The German Government, Admiral von Tirpitz added, desired to create a commercial high school as a basis for technical and medical schools and for institutes for political economy, forestry, and agriculture, to be founded later.

The question of meeting the enormous reduction in the revenue of China which will result from the suppression of opium has recently been considered by the controllers of the Customs at Peking and it is proposed to tax all articles of luxury.

Shanghai papers record the death of Captain J. D. C. Arthur, a very popular member of the Shanghai Licensed Pilots' Association, who was also well known along the China, Australian and New Zealand coasts, where he traded for many years while in command of one of the Eastern and Australian Co.'s liners and one of Messrs. Butterfield and Swire's steamers.

Mr. W. B. Mason has consented to be the permanent secretary of the British Association of Japan. A prize fund has just been opened in connection with the Japanese Language Examination Scheme. It is hoped that the prizes offered to candidates passing the third stage under the conditions outlined in the advertisements will prove an incentive to many Britishers to enter for these examinations, which were only commenced some six months ago. Mr. V. G. Bowden, after eight months' study, has already passed the required standard. The first prize out of the fund has therefore been awarded to him. There are now about 275 members of the Association. The Committee elected at the annual meeting, held last month, is as follows:—Chairman, Mr. F. G. Sale; Vice-Chairman, Mr. H. D. C. Jones; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. A. H. Cole Watson; Committee: Messrs. P. S. Bent, A. J. Cornes, L. J. Healing, J. Williamson Jones, C. K. Marshall Martin, and J. C. Ward.

The Dalai Lama, when he left Peking at 7.0 a.m. on the 21st ult., was escorted to the station by many high officials. Amongst these were Prince Kung, H.E. Chang Ying Tang, H.E. Ta Shou, the Comptroller of the Imperial Household, the Police Magistrate and a number of military officers. The Prince Regent, H.E. Chang Chih Tung, Prince Ching, H.E. Yuan Shih Kai, H.E. Shih Hsu, H.E. Lu Ch'uan Lin and other high officials sent him valuable presents, Mr. Rockhill, the Minister for the United States, called on the Dalai Lama on the 20th instant and presented him with a porcelain jar and stand. The Board of Finance has reported to the Imperial Household that the total amount expended in connection with the visit of the Dalai Lama, including all presents, amounts to about 200,000 Taels. The presents made to the Dalai Lama by the Throne are as follows:—8 Horses, 20,000 Taels, in cash; 8 pieces porcelain, 8 pieces glassware, 4 pieces fur, 16 pieces silk and about 150 pieces of edible delicacies. His Combo have also been recipients of many presents. In returning thanks to the Throne he presented a golden "joss" which was accepted. The Government has promised the Dalai Lama to see to the instruction of young students which he will send from Thibet at the beginning of the next year.

Captain Price's airship made an ascent at Shanghai on Christmas Day, but the N.C. *Daily News* says, misfortune dogged its path, for almost immediately something went wrong with the engine and the airship became a mere non-dirigible balloon. The wind carried it, at varying altitudes, in the direction of Woosung, and ultimately the aeronaut was compelled to let out the gas and descended near a Chinese village some ten miles away. While he was engaged in making arrangements for the transport of the airship back to Shanghai, Chinese curiosity or mania for curio-hunting prompted these spectators to make off with most of the framework, which had been damaged by the fall, and to test the workmanship of the balloon by inserting knives into the silk. Ultimately, towards 3 a.m. the truant airship returned to head quarters on the shoulders of fourteen coolies. General sympathy will be felt with Captain Price in his misfortune; but, doubtless, he will be well advised to postpone, as he intends, a further flight for a few months until he has perfected his vessel. The ascent on Friday of the "Messenger" shows that Captain Price has an airship *in posse*, and renders pardonable the enthusiasm which led him to advertise prematurely its capabilities. The money already spent on the ship amounts, we understand, to a good round sum, but Captain Price should be able to count upon being reimbursed as soon as it is an airship *in esse*.

TRADE DEPRESSION IN ENGLAND.

(Daily Press, January 4th.)

British trade and commerce, in common with that of nearly every manufacturing country, has suffered during the past twelve months to an extent which may be said to be unprecedented. To the United Kingdom being practically a free-trade country must be ascribed the fact that the national revenue has not been affected to a corresponding extent. But severe economic depression naturally tells upon the sources of revenue, whatever they may be. The financial year in the United Kingdom ends on the 31st March, and REUTER informs us that for the nine months of the year that have elapsed the revenue has fallen off by five million pounds sterling. That gives a monthly average of about £550,000, so that if this rate of decline continues the returns for the twelve months will show a loss of not less than seven millions sterling. When we bear in mind the fact that the total revenue of the United Kingdom for 1917-8 was estimated at £142,457,000 the decline in itself, though sufficiently serious, does not appear very alarming. The national income is derived mainly from excise, Customs, property and income tax, estate duty and the Post Office. In the absence of particulars we may safely assume that the decline has been mainly under the headings of property and income tax and customs. Down to the end of November the foreign trade of the United Kingdom for eleven months had shown a falling off to the enormous extent of ninety-nine millions sterling—a reduction in the imports equal to 9.07 per cent and in the exports to 11.60 per cent for the eleven months of the year. The articles contributing to the Customs revenue, however, are few, the chief being tobacco and snuff, sugar &c., tea, wine, and exported coal, but these are all of them articles for which there is likely to be a diminished demand in times of economic depression. An abstract of the import and export returns for those eleven months shows, for instance, that there has been a decline of £1,222,597 under the heading of "Other food and drink" which does not include grain and flour or meat but covers all the articles paying import duty. Tobacco, it is interesting to note, is one of the few items in the statement showing an increase. Besides this item, ships, grain and flour, and textile materials (other than wool and cotton) are the only items in the whole summary which do not exhibit a decline when compared with the returns for the corresponding period of 1907. The shrinkage in the exports has been almost general, the chief decline being in manufactured articles, which fall below the previous year's returns to the extent of £41,805,196. The returns for the last month of the year, we fear, are not likely to show any material improvement in this respect, for in the month of November alone there was a decline of £4,740,322 in the import of raw materials, of which cotton accounts for £2,528,319, this being doubtless attributable to the recent labour dispute in the cotton trade. For the same month the import of wool was more than half a million sterling below the figures for November 1907, and other textile materials were less by over two hundred thousand pounds. The month of November showed a reduction in the export of manufactured articles amounting to £5,628,502, of which £3,283,446 appears under the heading of cotton fabric, and £572,179 under woollen fabrics. The greatly restricted import of

raw material will naturally affect the export returns of December, so that it is fairly safe to conclude that the decline in the country's foreign trade for the whole year will not be less than £110,000,000 or about 10 per cent. There is no difficulty in realising that this great slump in the trade of the country has materially diminished the national revenue from the property and income tax, as well as from customs, and the present Government has made matters worse by its Old Age Pensions and other measures which commit the country to increased expenditure. The returns from Excise also have probably declined in view of the Government's confiscatory proposals in the now defunct Licensing Bill. In all probability the deficit to be faced when the Chancellor of the Exchequer comes to balance accounts at the end of the financial year will far exceed the amount of the decline in the revenue.

THE CALAMITY IN ITALY.

(Daily Press, 5th January.)

The telegraphic accounts describing the appalling calamity which has overtaken Southern Italy and Sicily go to show that, so far at least as the destruction of human life is concerned, it is probably the worst disaster of the kind in history. Certainly the records of earthquake disasters since the Christian era began record none which equal the present disaster in this respect, if we must accept the estimates that the telegrams have contained. The great earthquake of Yedo (Tokyo) in 1703, involving a loss of life estimated at 200,000 has hitherto figured in the records as the earthquake which involved the greatest loss of human life, and Peking has taken second place with 100,000 people "swallowed up" in 1731. We can take comfort in the fact that earthquakes attended with disastrous consequences are happily rare in China, which is regarded as outside the "earthquake zone." But the past century has furnished history with at least two bad earthquakes in China—that in Canton and neighbourhood in 1830, when 6,000 persons were estimated to have perished, and that which occurred in Yunnan in 1838 when upwards of 4,000 persons were killed. Within the same period there have been two destructive earthquakes in Manila, one in 1863 causing immense destruction of property and a loss of a thousand lives, and one in 1880 which, happily, was not so disastrous in its effects. The Netherlands Indies have had their share of these terrible visitations, but in the Far East the greatest sufferer has been Japan, where "the oldest resident" could compile a list of such disasters as have occurred in his own lifetime which would appear sufficiently formidable. The experiences of Italy, however, have in the aggregate been far worse. Calabria and Sicily, the scene of the present devastation, have suffered often, but apparently never so severely as on the present occasion. It is perhaps too early yet to form a very trustworthy estimate of the loss of life. We are inclined to think that a telegraphic error was made in the message reporting 300,000 persons to have perished by the disappearance of the island of Lipari. The island is only eighteen miles in circumference and the capital town has a population of not more than 12,000. We have no recent statistics for the whole of the island, but we are inclined to think that 30,000 would more nearly represent the population. The whole of the Lipari group of islands is included in the province of Messina which at the last census had a

population of 548,898. The inhabitants of the town of Messina itself, which is reported to have been practically destroyed by the earthquake, numbered about 150,000, and the town of Reggio Calabria, which suffered to a like extent, had a population of 45,000. Not all these have perished, however; for the telegrams make it clear that there are thousands in these towns who are homeless and in a state of starvation. But the devastation is not confined to the large towns. An extensive area has been affected, and it will probably be some days yet before the authorities are able to form a very accurate estimate of the loss of life involved. The most conservative estimates, however, are sufficiently appalling to draw the whole world's sympathy to Italy in this great misfortune. In Great Britain, in France, in the United States, in Canada and in the Argentine Republic, and we doubt not in other countries not mentioned in the telegrams, sympathy is being nobly expressed in the contributions which are being made for the relief of sufferers.

YUAN SHIH KAI'S DOWNFALL.

(Daily Press, January 6th.)

We take for what it may be worth the statement in the Chinese newspapers that YUAN SHIH KAI has been relieved against his will of the great and responsible offices he has recently been filling in the State. Were it not that the Peking correspondent of "The Times" has evidently corroborated that view we would have hesitated to unreservedly accept the statement. It will be recalled that when the present arrangements were made for the succession to the Throne it was reported that YUAN SHIH KAI had applied for sick-leave, and it was generally assumed, by those unaware of the condition of the statesman's health, that it was merely a diplomatic excuse to be relieved of a service which he recognised would be distasteful to him. In other words, it was represented that the new régime would be reactionary, and that service as an adviser to the Throne would be therefore impossible for a man of YUAN SHIH KAI's enlightened and progressive ideas. We learn, however, that as a matter of fact, YUAN SHIH KAI was genuinely ill at the time, and has ever since been a martyr to gout. In the Imperial Edict relieving His Excellency of the offices he holds, it is announced that he is physically unable to attend to his duties, and the decision to relieve him of his offices is set down in the Edict as a mark of Imperial favour. There are other plausible reasons for hesitating to accept the view that he has been pushed aside for political reasons. YUAN SHIH KAI is known to have advocated the selection of the new Emperor and we may be sure that on that account he enjoys the favour of the Regent. Dr. MORRISON in his estimate of the prospects under the new régime wrote: "The fact that the new Regent, Prince CHEN, an amiable, intelligent Prince, who has travelled in Europe, will be for the next twelve years virtually Emperor cannot weaken the position of YUAN SHIH KAI and those whose influence makes for progress, provided that he keeps independent of female influence." To what extent this last condition has been fulfilled we have no knowledge, but the fact that the Palace has been purged of the baneful influence of the eunuchs, combined with the many other evidences of enlightened views already given by the Regent surely tend to show that he is not in sympathy with the reactionary school. When we bear in mind what a

tower of strength YUAN SHIH KAI has proved in the recent crisis, it is inconceivable that at the present time the Regent would dismiss from office a statesman who in recent years has been regarded as the most powerful man in China and the real ruler of the Empire. Serious physical disability alone might reasonably be regarded the only excuse for the retirement. If it were otherwise, and YUAN SHIH KAI were to exhibit any sign of resentment, there would be an end to the tranquillity which has happily prevailed throughout a time of considerable apprehension. YUAN SHIH KAI is a Chinese, and the fact that NA TUNG a Manchu, has been appointed to fill the vacancy created by YUAN SHIH KAI's retirement from the Grand Council would in itself add to the outburst of indignation which a peremptory dismissal would be likely to evoke. It has to be remembered that YUAN SHIH KAI's protégés are filling many, if not most, of the highest positions in the provinces, and the retired statesman therefore wields an influence in the land which might well justify ominous forebodings if his retirement means an attempt to exclude his influence from the counsels of the Empire.

What gives countenance, however, to the view that YUAN SHIH KAI has fallen the victim of intrigue on the part of the reactionaries is that the retirement has not been preceded by the usual constant applications for "sick leave." Only one such application has been heard of, and that two months ago, and it is, to say the least, unusual to issue an Imperial Edict on the subject if only temporary sick leave is intended. No hope is expressed in the Edict that the statesman who has been doing so much for the material progress of the Empire might soon recover his health and return to the high office he now vacates. The retirement bears the stamp of finality, and it is not without some show of reason that Europe is apprehensive. It is well to note in this connexion that there is greater faith abroad in YUAN SHIH KAI's influence and power in the land than exists among the Chinese. Since a Manchu, T'IEH LIANG, obtained the control of the army which Yuan created, the influence of the ex-Viceroy of Chili is considered to have been weakened considerably.

H.E. Na Tung, the new Grand Councillor has filled many high offices in the State, including that of President of the Board of Foreign Affairs, in 1903. Among the other appointments he has held are those of Grand Secretary, General Commander of Gendarmerie, President of the Board of Revenue, and President of the Board of Interior. Only once has he travelled beyond the confines of the Empire, and that was in 1901 when he proceeded to Japan as a special ambassador. The selection of LIANG TUN-YEN to succeed YUAN as President of the Board of Foreign Affairs is especially acceptable to the Chinese in this part of the Empire, for His Excellency is a native of Kwangtung. Though young for such a position as statesmen count in China it is probable that the appointment gives great satisfaction to the Legations. For several years the new President was CHANG CHIH-TUNG's interpreter, and in 1907 he was selected to represent China at Washington, but did not proceed. He remained to become Junior Vice-President of the Board of Foreign Affairs, and is now promoted to the presidency. The retirement or dismissal of YUAN SHIH KAI is certainly disturbing, but until the factors which determined the step are better known it is unprofitable to indulge in speculations as to what will happen.

AMERICA AND CHINA.

(Daily Press, January 7th.)

The visit of H.E. TANG SHAO-YI to the United States as a Special Ambassador to convey to the President an expression of gratitude for the action of the United States in reference to the Boxer indemnity has given rise to much speculation in the American Press as to whether the visit did not have some additional significance. The letter from the late Emperor of China to the President, did not, however, contain a single phrase which could be construed into a hint of any desire for closer diplomatic relations, nor did His Excellency or the President let fall anything in the course of their speeches foreshadowing the Treaty negotiations so confidently predicted by a section of the American Press. Yet we observe that a telegram is published in a northern contemporary stating that His Excellency TANG SHAO-YI's efforts to induce the United States to enter into an alliance with China have failed. It is natural to suppose that, at the conferences which the Special Ambassador has had with Mr. Root, matters affecting the policy of the two countries in regard to each other were freely discussed, and possibly the Secretary of State was invited to express an opinion concerning the recent advocacy of an alliance by a section of the American Press. TANG SHAO-YI, however, is statesman enough to be able to anticipate the sort of reply he would receive. Apart from this matter which may be regarded as outside the pale of practical politics, the Special Ambassador doubtless, had many matters to talk over with the Secretary. In well informed circles in Washington it was believed that financial questions would take a leading place in the discussions at these conferences. This is not unlikely, for prior to leaving for the United States, TANG SHAO-YI was much occupied with financial affairs. The need of foreign capital to assist in the development of the resources of the Empire was forcing itself prominently upon his attention, and it is highly probable, therefore, that questions of this character did figure largely in the conferences between the Special Ambassador and Mr. Root. If TANG SHAO-YI has a leaning towards any particular foreign country it is towards America. When, by virtue of the famous Edict of May 1906, he became Vice-Imperial Commissioner of Customs, he dispatched, under Dr. TENNY, a selected band of Chinese students to America for instruction in Western methods of administration with a view to their becoming fitted to fill the higher posts in the Imperial Maritime Customs' service. Educational as well as financial questions were therefore probably discussed, but the only tangible result of these conferences that the world has so far heard about is the decision of the United States Government to raise the Legation at Peking to the rank of an Embassy. When we recall how jealously the leading States have always striven to assert their superiority by resisting demands on the part of inferior States for a step in diplomatic rank, the report is somewhat surprising that the United States contemplates in this way the recognition of China as ranking equally with her in the diplomatic world. Though none of the Powers raised the status of their Legations in Japan until after the abolition of extra-territoriality it has been reported that the elevation of the Legations in Tokyo has been a sore point with China, and that the hint has been given to the Foreign Powers that China would like to be placed on the same

footing in her diplomatic relations. There does not yet appear to be any official confirmation of the report from Washington and, though it is quite possible that the United States may have flattered China by such a concession, it is doubtful whether the other Powers are at present prepared to follow the example.

REFORM IN CHINA.

(Daily Press, January 8th.)

Those who are accustomed to read the Chinese newspapers cannot but be amazed at times at the evidence they afford of a consuming desire for reform in all branches of the public service in China. This has been more or less the case for the past two years, but since the commencement of the new régime it has been more conspicuous than ever. In order to convey to the foreign public an idea of the activities of the Chinese official mind at the present time, we will briefly sketch the contents of a couple of issues of the small but extremely interesting paper published at Peking by Chinese in the English language and designated *Chinese Public Opinion*. We may note first the announcement that in conversation with the Grand Councillors the Prince Regent has said that he had been engaged day and night thinking out a definite policy for the governance of the Empire, and he had come to the conclusion that the best domestic policy was to adjust the finances of the country and so improve the condition of the mass of the people. Other paragraphs go to show that the Regent has proposed to himself set an example. The Board of Ceremonies estimated that the Regent would need an allowance of 500,000 taels per annum to meet his expenses, but the Regent told the Grand Council that this was an extravagant amount, having regard to the country's present financial position, and His Highness has suggested that this sum shall be reduced to Taels 150,000 and that the balance should be devoted to public purposes. Moreover, as the present Empress Dowager has intimated that she does not desire to occupy the Summer Palace, the Regent wishes to divert the expense formerly incurred in the upkeep of the Summer Palace to the establishment of schools and colleges. Further, we read that a Decree has been issued enjoining upon all the importance of exercising economy, owing to the feeble financial condition of the country. Extravagance is denounced amongst officials, for all this, coming to the root of things, must have been taken from the Commonalty who pay the taxes and contribute to the revenues. Orders have been given by the Government to the various Boards requesting them to report monthly their incomes and expenditures. Particulars are also required of the funds already spent, estimated future expenditure and anticipated reserve funds. This order came into effect at the beginning of the present Chinese month. While on the subject of finance, we may note that though it is deemed to be not-immediately practicable, the Regent has expressed his approval of a proposal to reduce the Hatamen Octroi duties on daily necessities, which are described as a very great hardship on the people, and to increase the tax on ornaments and other luxuries to a corresponding extent. The interesting statement is published that the Prince Regent spends three hours in reading newspapers every evening after work and cuts out all articles on important topics of the day and references to misgovernment in any part of the Empire with a view to taking action thereon after the hundred days of mourning. We may note also the atten-

tion the Government is reported to be giving to currency matters, and in view of the increasing recognition of the value of a system of banking, steps are being taken to bring all Chinese banks under a common system of control.

Turning to other subjects, there is the statement that the Government is in hopes of making a start, at no distant date, with the reorganisation of the Navy. It is proposed to raise ten million taels for the purpose of building dockyards and purchasing warships. The Board of War talks of enlarging the army from 36 to 48 divisions and to bring the whole of the Empire under a common system of control. The need of unification in all branches of the public service has evidently been engaging the attention of the authorities. Supreme command of the Army and Navy is vested in the Regent by the regulations which lay down the duties devolving upon His Imperial Highness.

Preparations for the grant of a Constitution figure prominently in the Decrees, and we may note in connection with this subject that the Regent is required by the Regulations already mentioned to reverently read over, before the tablet of Her late Majesty the Empress Dowager, at the Imperial Ancestral Temple, the valedictory Decrees of the late Emperor and the late Empress Grand Dowager, and the second regulation requires that, when the time comes, the Prince Regent shall open the House of Parliament on behalf of the Emperor. There is a good deal of evidence of the Regent's interest in this matter, but we need only note here a Decree enjoining the Bureau for the compilation of works on Constitutional Government to hasten the completion of their task, and a proposal made by His Imperial Highness for the early establishment of a Provincial Constitutional Bureau in the Capital, which shall be composed of a representative from each province of the Empire. This Bureau is intended to pave the way for the constitution.

With regard to foreign policy the Regent is stated to have expressed a wish that China might remain friendly with all other nations, and at the same time jealously guard her own rights and interests. His Imperial Highness has suggested to the Grand Council that in each province of the Empire there should be a commissioner for international affairs, and has asked for the views of the Provincial Authorities in regard to this matter. It is also reported that His Imperial Highness desires to see four officials from each province—two with an English education, and two educated in France—attached to the Wai-wu-pu, presumably for consultative purposes when local questions are under discussion with the Foreign Ministers.

The dismissal of YUAN SHIH-KAI suggests that the pace has been too great for the reactionaries. The Regent a few weeks ago was desirous of relieving YUAN of the Presidency of the Wai-wu-pu in order that he might devote all his time and energy to the ever-increasing business of the Grand Council, and His Excellency TANG SHAO-YI, who has been on a special mission to the United States, was instructed by the Regent to hasten his return to Peking to take over the work of YUAN SHIH-KAI at the Wai-wu-pu. In this short interval "something has happened." YUAN SHIH-KAI is in disgrace and it remains to be seen whether the reactionaries have once again obtained the upper hand.

Taotai' Lew Yuk Sin, who is well-known in Hongkong and Canton, has arrived at Shanghai to participate in the Opium Conference.

RANDOM REFLECTIONS.

I like other mortals, I have to recognise the advent of 1909, and lest I should be deemed churlish or unsocial let me hasten to wish you all the compliments of the season. I won't bore you with any dissertations on the past or prognostications of the future, but I hope your mental stock-taking has not shown too many entries on the wrong side of the recording angel's diary and that you will keep all the good resolutions you make.

Certainly Hongkong brought in the New Year right royally. Crackers and bombs and rockets greeted the infant 1909 with an enthusiasm more marked than that which greeted its immediate predecessors, and, of course, the Scotsmen who went forth first footing did not go empty handed. It is to be hoped they brought good luck to all whom they visited.

Apropos of assisting at the birth of the New Year, the minister of Union Church yesterday related an incident which may be amusing, or otherwise, according to the point of view. The watch-night service on New Year's Eve had just concluded and the pastor went down from the pulpit to exchange greetings with members of the congregation. Going up to one stranger he held out his hand and was surprised to find it touch a whisky bottle which the man was endeavouring to conceal. Evidently his ideas as to bringing in the new year were a bit confused.

I suppose most people here have been struck by the number of new years that are celebrated in this part of the world. The Jews have their New Year about September, and not long afterwards the Parsees celebrate theirs. Then we have our own Xmas, which in itself marks the dawn of a new era, followed by our own New Year. The Mohammedans are the next to celebrate, and, of course, we all know when Chinese New Year falls. We should be a festive community with all these celebrations to honour.

Another amateur dramatic performance claims our attention and patronage. The Kowloon Dock Amateurs produce "The Silver King" next Saturday and Monday, and, if they do as well as they did with "Rob Roy" they will earn hearty congratulations. I am told that the pay will be better mounted than it was when the professionals played it three weeks ago. Good luck to them!

Here's a hint for some of our business concerns. A correspondent writing to a northern journal says:—"It has never perhaps struck local stores to dress up their shroffs 'swell' so as to facilitate the collection of their outstanding accounts. On Tuesday, I received the visit of an exquisitely dressed native. He was garbed in a magnificent robe of blue silk brocade, with a skirt to match. He was smoking a fragrant Egyptian cigarette, held in a delicate amber mouthpiece. His general 'hong-tong' appearance was overpowering, and I could not resist offering him the best seat available. When he was seated, I asked him what gave me the pleasure of his visit. He replied: 'My blong Loyal Hotel bar boy, I come cathee chits.' I paid him the \$2.00 in silence; had he been dressed in the usual 'boy' clothes I would have told him 'Come next month, number five day.' The conclusion to be drawn from this is that money spent on the shroff's outfit might be a good investment. Instead of 'small profits and quick returns' the motto might be 'smartly dressed shroffs, no bad debts.'

China is not so far behind as some people would think. Feminism is, as we know, very acute at home, so its outbreaks are occasionally somewhat painful. Whether China has a Suffragette problem I know not, but feminism has, according to a Paris journal, developed to an extraordinary degree, and in most large centres there is a newspaper run by women. But I did not know until a day or two ago that China was blessed with a *Lade Journalist*. But I learn from the *Sourcy* indicated that China has crowds of em. In Peking, it is stated, "nine journals are edited,

printed, and sold by women. (anton produces four newspapers in a like manner, Shanghai six, and Foochow three." I suppose if China had a constitution it would be able to furnish spectacles of women entering the sacred precincts of the House of Parliament and demanding their rights or attacking Cabinet ministers with virulent tongues.

The innocent young man was scanning the newspaper and as a certain piece of news arrested his attention he said "Why, here's a couple in America seeking for divorce on the eve of their golden wedding." "Better late than never" growled one of his companions, a married man, and the company looked sympathetic.

Dear me! What a shock, and just after Christmas too, with its mistletoe privileges. Fancy reading this: "The number of diseases which kissing causes is unbelievable to one who has not studied the question," asserts a Philadelphia physician. "During the interval of the kiss, one may imagine the various germs rushing back and forth with unholy glee." This is indeed a fearsome picture, yet one may ask what harm the germs do while rushing. That is, of course, among ordinarily healthy persons. At any rate, as between a world without kisses and one with, the choice will probably continue to lie with the kisses. But all the same, I am worried. Will the Sanitary Board attempt to interfere in our Christmas Eve festivities?

What a future lies before our surgeons? By a simple operation on the skull removing pressure on the brain, a man, forty-eight years of age, was changed from a drunkard and a thief to an honest, industrious citizen. Of course it happened in America. If surgeons can work such marvels, we may anticipate their doing more than mere preachers to bring about the millenium.

ROEBICK RANDOM.

HONGKONG.

A Fancy Dress Ball, on an elaborate scale, was given at Kingsclere on the evening of New Year's Day.

Another case of armed robbery in the city has been reported. On this occasion the victim was an old woman who was robbed of a small sum of money and some jewellery.

The return showing the number of communicable diseases reported during the week ended 2nd January contained three cases, one each of plague, cholera, and enteric fever.

Captain Mitchell Taylor, A.D.C. to H.E. the Governor, returned to Hongkong on the *Mongolia* on Saturday from Japan. He looks greatly improved.

"Thanksgiving and humiliation" was the subject of discussion at the first meeting in connection with the universal week of prayer opened on Jan. 4th. The Rev. C. H. Hickling led the discussion.

Petty thieving and snatching from the person have been very rife of late. On Sunday no fewer than three cases of snatching were reported at the Central Police Station between 9 and 12 o'clock.

A rhinoceros horn, valued at \$50, was stolen from a shop in Bonham Strand on Sunday. Three men entered the shop and while two engaged the attention of the shopkeeper the third got away with the horn.

At the City Hall on Monday another successful concert was given by the band of S.M.S. *Fuerst Bismarck*, assisted by Mr. E. Danenberg. The attendance was not as large as the excellent programme merited, but the appreciation of those present was manifested by continued applause.

A tiffin was given to Professor Ernest Dewitte Burton, of the University of Chicago, by Dr. Amos P. Wilder, American Consul-General, at the Hongkong Hotel on Monday. The gentlemen present were:—Hon. Mr. F. H. May, The Bishop of Victoria, Messrs. Pollock, Atkinson, Harris, Turner, Slade, Bzyer, Holyoak, McPherson, Elliott, J. R. Wood, Hickling, Couland, Pieroy, Reed, and F. D. Cheshire, American Consul-General at large.

The captain and officers of the U.S.S. *Helena* were at home on New Year's Day to a large number of American residents.

The marriage of Comte de Silguy to Aukareta, daughter of Mr. C. Ewens, of Hongkong, was celebrated at Bayswater on Dec. 3rd.

"Nations and their rulers" was the subject of discussion at last night's meeting in connection with the universal week of prayer. The leader was the Rev. J. H. France.

Receipts into the Treasury from January 1st to 31st October, 1908, totalled \$16,297,846 87, while payments out amounted to \$16,503,835 88. The excess of payments over receipts is therefore \$205,989.01.

His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to recognise Mr. W. Kien as being in charge of the Consulate General of the Netherlands-India in Hongkong during the absence on leave of Dr. A. van de Sande Bakthuyzen.

Mr. C. H. Grace, who went home on leave about a year ago, owing to ill-health, has resigned the position of Secretary of the Hongkong Club and Mr. James Craik, who has since been Acting Secretary, has been given the substantive appointment.

His Excellency the Governor-in-Council has been pleased to appoint, under Section 6 of Ordinance No. 15 of 1908, the Hon. Mr. A. M. Thomson, and Messrs E. D'Aquino, R. H. Crofton, S. B. C. Ross, and F. W. Clark to be directors of the Widows' and Orphans' Pensions.

Between Monday evening and Tuesday morning there were stolen from a drawer in Messrs. Deacon, Looker and Deacon's office stamps to the value of \$140.60. The stamps ranged from ten cents to fifty cents, \$1, \$2, \$3, \$5 and \$10. An office coolie who is missing is suspected.

We have received the report of the Hongkong Chess Club for the past year, which gives the results of the matches played and sets forth the programme for the ensuing season. The Club shows considerable vitality and financially also is in a flourishing condition, there being a balance of \$204 in hand.

For selling poison without being a duly registered chemist Kwan Tye, of 114 Queen's Road Central, was at the Magistracy on Jan. 5 fined \$50. He was also fined \$25 for selling the same without having the word "poison" printed thereon in accordance with the conditions laid down by the Ordinance.

Heavy fines were imposed by Mr. Wood at the Magistracy yesterday on five men who were charged with being in unlawful possession of dynamite. The police, suspecting that the defendants who reside at Cheung Sha Wan were using the explosive for fishing, made a raid on the house and found ten pounds of dynamite and a quantity of fuses. One defendant was fined \$100, three were fined \$75, and the fifth \$50. They were all members of one family.

An instance of a man who preferred prison to liberty was discovered on Jan. 6th when a Chinese was brought before the Magistrate on a charge of returning from banishment. Apparently he found difficulty in getting his daily bread in the country and he resolved to return to Hongkong and enter prison. He came up to the Police Station, gave his name, number of photograph, so that his identification was easy. As it was found that he had been banished, the Magistrate granted the man's wish by sending him to prison for six months.

Another of the series of organ recitals arranged for the first Tuesday of the month was given on the 5th inst. by Mr. Denman Fuller at St. John's Cathedral. The programme consisted of five organ solos and two vocal items by Mrs. Belilios, which were much appreciated, particularly "With verdure clad" which seemed more adapted to her voice. The programme was as under:—

- 1.—Prelude and Fugue in G Major Bach
- 2.—Pastorale Wely
- 3.—Aria "Angels, ever bright and fair" Handel
Mrs. Belilios.
- 4.—Basso Ostinato Arensky.
- 5.—"To the Sea" and "Starlight" MacDowell.
- 6.—Aria "With verdure clad" Haydn.
Mrs. Belilios.
- 7.—Imperial March Edward Elgar.

SANITARY BOARD.

A meeting of the Sanitary Board was held on the 5th inst. at the Board Room. Mr. R. O. Hitchenson presided, and there were present. Hon. Mr. W. Chatham, J.M.G., Colonel Bedford, Hon. Mr. Irving, Hon. Mr. E. A. Hewett, Mr. A. Shelton Hooper, Mr. H. Humphreys, Mr. Lau Chu Pak, Dr. Pearse (Medical Officer of Health), and Mr. A. Gibson (Secretary).

THE CONSERVANCY CONTRACTOR.

Mr. HOOPER said that, as the complaints against the conservancy contractor in the orders of the day for the last meeting had been taken confidentially as it was suggested that some one would be criminally implicated, he moved that the minutes be made public.

Mr. HUMPHREYS seconded, and the resolution was agreed to.

The minute was to the effect that Mr. Hooper moved that the contractor be fined \$100 and be told that his carrying out of the contract would be carefully watched until the end of the year and that he would be fined \$25 for each breach of the provisions in his contract.

Mr. LAU CHU PAK seconded, and the resolution was agreed to.

THE SPITTING NUISANCE.

The following letter was received from the Colonial Secretary:—

Sir.—With reference to your letter No. 9773/07 of 28th January last, I am directed to transmit for the information of the Board the enclosed copy of a minute by His Excellency the Governor dated 21st instant.

I am to suggest that the Sanitary Board should invite the public to provide spittoons and to issue notices in Chinese on the subject—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. H. MAY.

His Excellency's minute was as follows:—
There is no reason why steps should not be taken without further delay in the matter of the spitting nuisance.

(a) I think it might be suggested to occupants of flats, etc., that they should provide spittoons in the halls, passages and stairways. They should be of metal, and either fixtures containing sand, etc., or chained to fixtures so as not to be stolen. Government offices, Post Office, etc. should be so provided at once.

(b) The Registrar-General should instruct the lecturers on hygiene and sanitation to point out the danger to health caused by pulverised nasal and pectoral excreta being inhaled, and how it has been conclusively proved that pulmonary diseases are thus propagated. Also that meat and other eatables exposed for sale are thus infected; that the object aimed at is that expectorators should use the drains and gutters, and not the pavements.

(c) Notices should be posted. They should (at first, at any rate) be worded in a conciliatory way something like the following:—"Please do not spit (or eject matter from the nose) on the pavement, but, in a house, use the spittoons provided, and, when in a street, use the drains or side gutters. The habit of spitting when the matter is not speedily removed has been proved to cause diseases of the lungs which are so prevalent in Hongkong."

Mr. SHELTON HOOPER minuted—I quite agree with the minute of His Excellency the Governor, which embodies the suggestions made at the meeting of the Sanitary Board on 10th November last. Effect should be given to it at once.

Mr. LAU CHU PAK—I have no objection to issuing notices advising people not to spit in public places, but I am not in favour of any legislation in the matter.

Mr. HOOPER moved that the Sanitary Department be instructed to give effect to the letter of the Colonial Secretary covering His Excellency's letter.

Hon. Mr. HEWETT seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

It was decided that the papers be re-circulated.

CLOSING OF A CHINESE CEMETERY.

At a meeting of the Board, held on September 15th last, it was agreed that the use of the Cheungshawan cemetery as a plague cemetery should be given up.

The MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH minuted—The bodies left to the Department for burial should, I think, be buried at Kailungwan and Matsuwak cemeteries. If this is decided on it will be necessary to prepare

sites for such burials. During the height of the plague season it may be necessary to have trenches dug, instead of individual graves. This was done at Cheungshawan by a contractor.

This recommendation was adopted on the motion of the PRESIDENT, seconded by Mr. LAU CHU PAK.

MORTALITY STATISTICS.

The mortality statistics for the week ended 12th December calculated at a death rate per 1000 per annum of the total population was 23.8 as against 24.3 for the corresponding week of last year.

RAT RETURN.

The rat return for the week ended 19th December showed that in the whole Colony 1,253 rats were caught, of which three were found to be infected. In the week ended 26th December of the 1001, rats caught, only one was found to be infected.

THE CANTON-HANKOW RAILWAY LOAN.

Cable news has reached Canton, our correspondent says, that the Wai-wu-pu have negotiated a loan of £2,000,000 with a British Syndicate for the Liang-Hu sections of the Canton-Hankow Railway.

On the 3rd instant His Excellency Chang Chi Tung dispatched a telegram to Viceroy Chang in which he reminded the Viceroy that the Canton-Hankow Railway will be one of the most important railways in China and that the construction of same cannot be delayed any longer. The Liang-Hu sections of the trunk line being much longer than the Kwangtung section, it would cost a larger sum of money to construct than the two other sections. H.E. Chang Chi Tung further states that he had consulted with their Excellencies Chan Kwei Loong and Shum Chun Ming with regard to obtaining the necessary funds for the construction of the Liang-Hu sections and that both were in favour of a foreign loan.

It was decided to request the Wai-wu-pu to negotiate for the loan with a British firm whose representative had already arrived in Peking, and Ko Ling Wai and Tsang Kwong Yung were delegated to enter into negotiations. As funds are being raised for the speedy construction of the Liang Hu section, the part of the line which is under the control of Viceroy Chang, must not be allowed to be delayed any longer. Chang Chi Tung added that he understood that the Kwangtung gentry are people who have always been very energetic in subscribing for railway shares—a thing that has hitherto never been done by the people in any of the other provinces,—but he is not aware of the actual amount subscribed by the Cantonese or whether the amount subscribed is sufficient for the construction of the whole Kwangtung section of the line. If there should be any shortage, it would be necessary that it should be covered in the Liang Hu loan, which would serve to expedite the construction of the Kwangtung section. In conclusion, H.E. Chang Chi Tung requests Viceroy Chang to instruct the gentry of Kwangtung to go into the question at once and cable the decision as soon as possible.

It is reported that the Kwangtung gentry have reported to the Viceroy that they could get the necessary funds for the construction of the section of the line at his end without the help of a foreign loan.

If that is the case then the Canton-Hankow Railway Company of Kwangtung does not participate in the loan closed with the British Syndicate by the Wai-wu-pu.

A NEW BARONET.

The senior partner of Messrs E. D. Sassoon and Company, is among the recipients of New Year honours, Mr. Jacob Sassoon having received a baronetcy, and congratulations have been addressed to Sir Jacob from all sources. It is interesting to remember that the new baronet was thirty years ago the representative in Hongkong of the firm which his father founded, and recently Sir Jacob gave a donation of ten lakhs of rupees for the establishment of the Central Institute of Science in Bombay, with the growth of which city the Sassoon family has long been identified.

A NEW SOLICITOR.

Before His Honour the Chief Justice in the Supreme Court, on the 6th inst., before the business of the day began, the Hon. Mr. H. E. Pollock, K.C., who was instructed by Mr. C. D. Wilkinson (of Messrs. Wilkinson and Grist) moved that Mr. Montgomery Reader Harris be approved, admitted, and enrolled to practice as a solicitor and proctor of this honourable Court. Supplementing the information on the file before his Lordship, Mr. Pollock remarked that Mr. Harris came of a good legal stock. His maternal grandfather had been a prominent solicitor in London for some years, and filled the important post of President of the Incorporated Law Society in London, and Mr. Harris' father was Mr. Reader Harris, K.C., a well known figure of the Parliamentary bar. Mr. Harris himself had won an honours degree in law at Oxford, and his Honour would see that he came here to join the firm of Messrs. Wilkinson and Grist as managing clerk. The usual papers were on the file showing that he had been admitted to the roll of solicitors of the Supreme Court of Judicature in England.

His Lordship said the papers were in order and he had much pleasure in admitting Mr. Harris. The Court felt quite sure that he would do credit to the distinguished stock from which he had come, and to the distinguished firm to which he had been appointed.

HIS EXCELLENCY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY.

While the many friends he has made during his sojourn in Hongkong will rejoice to hear the news of the appointment of Mr. A. J. Brackenbury as Assistant Resident of Nyasaland, they will regret his departure from our island. During his stay in Hongkong Mr. Brackenbury, by his courtesy, has earned the respect of all classes of the community, and this announcement of his impending departure will be read with regret. However, we feel sure the public will cordially join with us in extending to Mr. Brackenbury best wishes for his welfare and success in his new sphere of labour. Mr. Brackenbury leaves the Colony by the P. and O. s.s. *Delhi* on the 23rd January.

NEW YEAR MEETING.

A New Year meeting, held under the auspices of the Hongkong Christian Union, took place at the Theatre Royal last night. There was a good attendance. Rev T. W. Pearce presided and there were also present His Lordship the Bishop of Victoria, Revs. C. H. Hickling, J. A. Baker, E. J. Barnett, Thornhill, A. D. Stewart and F. J. Johnson. After devotional exercises the Victoria Quartette rendered "Remember me oh mighty One." Bishop Lander at the outset of his remarks referred to the growing desire for the union of Christendom, and then went on to discourse upon the fundamental truths of Christianity, taking the question "What shall I do with Jesus" as his text. The Victoria Quartette sang "Pass me not oh gentle Saviour," and Mr. White presided at the piano and led the praise.

A DISHONEST BOY.

Mr. J. J. Stubbings, of the Electric Works, Wanchai, prosecuted his "boy" at the Magistracy yesterday for stealing twenty cents. It appears that the boy had been engaged on the 1st December and on the 8th gave notice of his intention to leave. Since the 21st various small sums of money amounting in all to about \$16 have been missed and suspicion fell on the boy. On the 4th inst., Mr. Stubbings marked some small money which he placed in a drawer in the bedroom. This disappeared and next morning Mrs. Stubbings marked a twenty-cent piece which she placed in her purse and deposited in the drawer. When the boy was in the bedroom she went upstairs and examining her purse found that the money was gone. She detained the boy and sent for her husband who brought the police. Sergt. Pitt searched the boy and found the missing coin, and a search of his boy revealed other stolen coins. Defendant was sentenced by Mr. Wood to three months' hard labour.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DESTRUCTION OF RATS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."]

5th January, 1909.

SIR,—We have heard a great deal lately as to the necessity for destroying rats and mice with a view to decreasing the spread of bubonic plague and other ills, and I presume we are all agreed as to the wisdom of this step.

The point to which I would desire to direct the attention of your readers however is the manner in which these animals are destroyed.

After luncheon to-day I met a servant with a cage containing a rat just captured. I asked how it was to be killed, and he informed me that the custom was to put the rat into boiling water.

I appealed to one of the officials of the establishment and then learned that this was the customary manner of killing the rats.

Fortunately two of his superiors appeared on the scene at this moment and instructions were at once given that in future all rats and mice should be drowned in cold water.

No doubt all householders here are endeavouring to keep down the rats in their houses, but probably few know how these unfortunate creatures, when captured, are destroyed, and my experience of this afternoon appears to justify my bringing the matter before the public.

The usual custom among a certain class of servants is to amuse themselves by taking a kettle of boiling water, slowly pouring this over the wretched little animal while still in the cage, enjoying its agony as it runs from side to side endeavouring to escape the torture inflicted. Another favourite form of killing rats is to soak them in kerosine oil and then set fire to them. I have personally obtained convictions here and elsewhere against servants (not my own, I am glad to say) for killing rats by these methods.

I would now appeal to your readers to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that any rats or mice caught on their premises be humanely destroyed.—Yours truly,

EDBERT A. HEWETT.

KULANGSU (AMOY) MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.

Minutes of a meeting of the Council, held at the Board Room, on the 13th December, 1908.

Present:—Messrs. W. H. Wallace (Chairman), J. S. Fenwick, Huang Ts'an-chew, S. Okuyama, W. Wilson, the Health Officer and the Secretary, (Mr. C. Berkeley Mitchell.)

THE RATEPAYERS' LIST.

The list of persons qualified to vote at meetings of ratepayers, published annually, was read, approved, and passed for publication.

DISPUTE WITH A CONTRACTOR.

It was decided to request Mr. D. M. Mickle and Mr. Huang Ts'an-chew, the Chinese member of the Council, to jointly inspect the new Municipal Buildings, and decide what is a just and fair amount the contractor should receive as a final payment on account of his contract.

AN ASSESSMENT DISPUTE.

A letter was read from Mr. Lim Kni Sing complaining that his property at San-ku-chan has been overassessed. It was resolved that he be informed that he can either refer the case to Rev. G. M. Wales, the gentleman nominated by the Chinese ratepayers as their representative on the Land Commission, or the Council will refer the case to the Land Commission as a whole. In the mean time, as his contention cannot be taken as an excuse for not paying his taxes, he is to be requested to forward cheque for same without delay.

TENDERS.

The tenders for 1909 night soil contract are opened, and considered. Subject to satisfactory references being given, the tender of Kho Pok Seng for \$1,800 was accepted.

THE MIXED COURT.

The Superintendent of Police reported that the Mixed Court was still closed on account of official mourning.

In the fertile districts of the Heilungkiang province of Manchuria, mulberry trees are to be cultivated in future in place of the poppy, with a view to founding a sericultural industry.

SUPREME COURT.

Monday, January 4th.

IN CRIMINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR FRANCIS
PIGGOTT (CHIEF JUSTICE).

ALLEGED LARCENY AND RECEIVING.

Li Tsau and Kwan Hing were indicted on charges of larceny and receiving. Prisoners pleaded not guilty, and the following jurors were empanelled:—H. Gittins (foreman), A. Morfey, J. Dickie, G. Rapp, H. E. Craddock, E. A. Kennedy and H. J. van der Bosch.

The Hon. Mr. W. Rees Davies, K.C., Attorney-General, who was instructed by Mr. Dennys, Jr., from the office of the Crown Solicitor, informed his Lordship and the gentlemen of the jury that the prisoners in this case were charged with stealing a large amount of clothing, and with being in possession of stolen property, well knowing the same to have been stolen. The owner of the property was the master of a blacksmith shop in Wing Lok Street. He would tell the Court that when he arose on the morning of the 7th ultimo he missed four boxes made of pigskin which contained a large amount of clothing. Information was immediately given to the police, and on the night of the 17th ultimo a Chinese constable saw the first defendant talking to the second. He also observed that he had something wrapped up in a handkerchief, and, on questioning the first defendant, learned that it was clothing. The second defendant told the constable he was going to buy the clothing from the first. The constable also noticed that the first man had some pawn tickets, and he saw the second defendant snatch them from the first and tear them up. The policeman then arrested both defendants and regained the torn pieces of the pawn tickets. Pawnshops were then visited, and several of the stolen goods found and identified by the prosecutor as his property. Subsequently the police obtained a search warrant and proceeded to search the premises where the two defendants were alleged to live. There they found the stolen bags with a number of other articles, and in addition some ropes, pepper, daggers and so forth.

The jury, without retiring, returned a verdict of guilty against both prisoners on the second count, and his Lordship sentenced each man to three years' imprisonment with hard labour.

ALLEGED ROBBERY.

Chan To, Tse Yan and Li Kai were arraigned on a charge of robbery. Prisoners denied the charge, and the following jury was empanelled:—H. T. Richardson (foreman), S. G. Fenton, S. Swart, R. Abraham, E. Raymond, G. K. Haxton and R. Aitken.

The Attorney-General informed the jurors that the three prisoners were placed before the Court on a charge of robbery with violence. The affair took place at 37, Kowloon City Road, at about 7.15 on the morning of November 21st. The inhabitants of the house at the time the robbery took place were four women. The owner, a man, had gone out to work at seven o'clock. A woman named So Mui would tell the main facts connected with the robbery. She would say that on the morning in question three men walked up stairs to the second floor, and one of them called out "Here is a basket for you." She was sitting on her bed when two of the men entered her room, the other going into the cubicle of another woman. So Mui asked him where he was going, but at that moment she was seized by the other two men who pulled two bangles off her right wrist. The neighbours hearing a noise, gave the alarm, and the robbers made off. Witnesses would say that all the men were armed with knives, and one of the women was slightly wounded in the breast. As far as the Attorney-General understood, the statements made by the prisoners to the police implied that they were at the premises about the time of the robbery, so it appeared to be purely a question of whether the jurors were satisfied with the identification of the men.

When the case for the Crown was nearing completion, and the accused were asked if they wished to question a police witness, the second defendant said—In reality I did commit this crime, but I did not carry a knife. The third

prisoner was then asked if he wished to question the witness and replied—I also wish to confess, but deny entirely about the knife.

The accused were then asked if they wished to make statements.

The first defendant said he had nothing further to say.

The second said he did not make the gag. It was made by the first prisoner.

The third man said they went to the house with the intention of robbing the inmates, thinking they would be asleep. But when they entered the house, they found them awake, and that was the reason the inmates gave the alarm.

His Lordship remarked that in view of the interesting statements made he did not think it necessary to trouble the jurors with any reference to the evidence.

The jury, without retiring, brought in a verdict of guilty against the three accused, and his Lordship sentenced the first and second to five years' hard labour, and the third defendant to seven years' hard labour.

Tuesday, January 5th.

IN CRIMINAL JURISDICTION

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR FRANCIS PIGGOTT
(CHIEF JUSTICE).

THE PEAK MURDER.

Kwok Leung, Li Shek Chung and Hung Hoi were indicted on the charge of killing and murdering one Pu Tung, at the Peak on October 22nd of last year. Prisoners denied the charge and the following jury was empanelled:—T. P. Hall (foreman), H. J. van der Bosch, J. P. Ulderup, D. A. Purves, H. Reeves, H. E. Craddock and H. A. Lammert.

The Hon. Mr. W. Rees Davies, K.C., Attorney-General, who was instructed by Mr. Dennys, Jr., from the office of the Crown Solicitor, appeared for the Crown, the prisoners being defended by Mr. H. G. Calthrop, who was instructed by Mr. R. D. Atkinson (of Messrs. Deacon, Looker and Deacon).

The Attorney-General stated that the three prisoners were standing their trial on a charge of wilful murder committed on 22nd October last year. The first and second prisoners were chair coolies in the employ of Mr. Holworthy, and the third, who was in the employ of Mr. Gresson, was also a chair coolie. Apparently, from the evidence available, the murder was the outcome of some trivial quarrel which had taken place between the deceased, who was a Punti, and a Hoklo. The three prisoners were Hoklos. The story of the dispute in the first place would be told by a man named Woo Kain, a Punti who went up to the Peak with the deceased man that day. Another man who was in the tram with them appeared to have put his foot on the jacket of the deceased, and some trumpery dispute followed. When the three men got out at the top tram station it appeared that the stranger challenged the deceased to fight. All three then walked away in the direction of the Peak Club. At a certain spot which is described as Jardine's Junction, the man Woo Kiu would tell the Court that he saw some ten or more men, all Hoklos, running up to where he was standing with the deceased and the stranger. He saw them strike blows at the deceased, but appears to have run away immediately. The story would then be taken up by Ku Yun, who says he met the deceased at Jardine's Junction at 11.45 a.m. and that he had a talk with him. He would say that while they were speaking the second defendant approached and stepped deliberately on the foot of the deceased. The two men then had a dispute, and the second defendant ran up the steps to Gresson's coolie house, called out, and some 6 or 7 coolies came from the house with bamboos, amongst the number being the third prisoner. Some of the coolies he said, poked the deceased with the poles; and some struck him. He witness got frightened and ran to Mt. Gough Police Station to inform the police. On his return he found the deceased, his friend, dead. Another witness, Wu Ping, would say that he saw the deceased being chased by the first and second accused. The first accused struck him with a bamboo pole, and when he fell the second prisoner kicked him. After administering these blows, he said, the two defendants ran back in the direction from which they had come. Shortly after the murder this witness gave information to the

police, and pointed out the first prisoner. The doctor would say that death was due to spinal haemorrhage as a result of the blows on the back and the neck. Another witness would speak definitely as to the third accused being the man who struck the last, and this witness subsequently identified him at the Central Police Station from a number of other men. On the other hand he stated emphatically that the first and second accused were not there. This was undoubtedly a discrepancy of a material character in the evidence, and the only suggestion the Attorney-General could make was that the witnesses must have been speaking about two distinct assaults. The facts, so far as they went, were simple, but the jurors would see from the depositions that there would be some difficulty in sifting the whole truth.

The case stands part heard.

Wednesday, January 6th.

IN CRIMINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR FRANCIS PIGGOTT (CHIEF JUSTICE).

THE PEAK MURDER.

The hearing of the capital charge preferred against Kwok Leung, Li Shek Chung and Hung Hoi was continued before his Lordship and a jury composed of Messrs. T. P. Hall (foreman), H. J. van der Bosch, J. P. Ulderup, D. A. Purves, H. Reeves, H. E. Craddock and H. A. Lammert.

The Hon. Mr. W. Rees Davies, K.C., Attorney-General, who was instructed by Mr. Dennys, Jr., from the office of the Crown Solicitor, appeared for the Crown, the prisoners being defended by Mr. H. G. Calthrop, who was instructed by Mr. R. D. Atkinson (of Messrs. Deacon, Looker and Deacon).

The case for the prosecution closed in the forenoon.

Mr. Calthrop, in the afternoon, opened the defence. He told the jurors that this was a case in which the evidence brought by the prosecution was of a most extraordinary conflicting character. If the jury was to believe one of the witnesses, they would have to come to the conclusion that another was committing perjury. It was not a question of a mistake which a man might make, but the most deliberate perjury that he thought he had ever heard since he had been in the Colony. At the end of his speech, when opening the case, the Attorney-General said the only way he could possibly reconcile the evidence of the witnesses was by coming to the conclusion that they were giving evidence as to two different assaults down by the Peak Church. If the jurors believed the first witness they could not possibly believe the second. He would ask them to say on the evidence that it was impossible to believe any of the witnesses, except the European constables. It was a peculiar thing about this case that the three prisoners were Hoklos, and all the witnesses, including the lukongs, were Puntis. That was a very significant fact.

Evidence was then called, and the hearing adjourned.

Thursday, January 7th.

IN CRIMINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR FRANCIS PIGGOTT (CHIEF JUSTICE).

THE PEAK MURDER.

The hearing of the capital charge preferred against Kwok Leung, Li Shek Chung and Hung Hoi was concluded before his Lordship and a jury composed of Messrs. T. P. Hall (foreman), H. J. van der Bosch, J. P. Ulderup, D. A. Purves, H. Reeves, H. E. Craddock and H. A. Lammert.

The Hon. Mr. W. Rees Davies, K.C., Attorney-General, who was instructed by Mr. Dennys, Jr., from the office of the Crown Solicitor, appeared for the Crown, the prisoners being defended by Mr. H. G. Calthrop, who was instructed by Mr. R. D. Atkinson (of Messrs. Deacon, Looker and Deacon).

Mr. Calthrop, on the conclusion of the evidence, addressed the Jury on behalf of the prisoners. After dealing at length with the evidence he remarked that two stories had been put forward: one that somebody put his foot on deceased's clothes; and the other that a man

went and trod on his foot at Jardine's Corner. They were absolutely absurd stories.

His Lordship—You don't deny, Mr. Calthrop, that if one of these people were killed in a fight it would be murder?

Mr. Calthrop—If it was a sudden affray it would not.

His Lordship—What would it be?

Mr. Calthrop—Manslaughter.

His Lordship—If the coolies were called down from Mr. Gresson's coolie quarters to attack a man, and a fight ensues and death follows, that is murder.

Mr. Calthrop—It depends how it is done and what it is done with. They were not at that time using weapons of a very serious nature, but the affair turned out to be serious.

Concluding his address, Mr. Calthrop told the jurors that if they found any of the prisoners had taken part in the fight, he would suggest that their action did not amount to the very serious crime of murder, but was simply an offence which amounted to manslaughter.

The Attorney-General told the jurors that whether there was, or was not a motive, if they were satisfied that any of these men committed the act alleged, in law assuming there was malice, it would be murder. Regarding the first prisoner, he did not regard the evidence against him as of the same strength as that against the other two. The evidence against the other two, however, was sufficient to bring them within the category of the crime. He submitted it had been substantiated, and it was for the jury to say whether they thought the evidence against the first accused was substantiated.

His Lordship, in summing up, told the jury that they must consider the guilt of the first, second and third prisoners each as an independent case. This was a case which, in spite of complicated evidence, was bound to be put before a jury to say whether the three men were guilty of a crime. With regard to the law, he would direct them as follows: If there was a clan fight between Hoklos and Puntis without any clear evidence as to how the fight began, then the jury might find participants guilty of manslaughter. But if they believed that there was such a deliberate act as one of the prisoners calling down Mr. Gresson's coolies, and that those men thereupon attacked the deceased, and if the fight was followed up by a deliberate chase, then the jury must find those who participated guilty of that crime.

At 4.19 p.m. the jury retired to consider their verdict, returning into Court fourteen minutes later. They found the first prisoner not guilty, and the second and third guilty of manslaughter.

Mr. Calthrop here remarked that his Lordship had noticed that the evidence had not been translated to the prisoners, and pointed out that it should have been. Counsel therefore asked his Lordship to state a case for the Full Court on this point as to whether the evidence could go to a jury.

His Lordship—Is there any authority?

Mr. Calthrop—That I cannot say, but the rule is that no person can be committed for any crime unless the evidence has been heard by him.

His Lordship—You will have to give me an authority for that. It is an elementary proposition.

Mr. Calthrop—That is the worst of it. Elementary propositions have no authority at all.

His Lordship—You move to quash the conviction?

Mr. Calthrop—I think that would be the proper course.

His Lordship—In the case of an accused person being convicted I may postpone judgment until such a question has been considered and decided, but before I do that I must be satisfied that there is some point to reserve.

Mr. Calthrop referred his Lordship to the case where three Indians were tried for murder at the Supreme Court in the December Sessions of 1905, and stated that it had never been heard of a man being convicted on evidence he had not heard.

His Lordship—The practice varies when a prisoner is represented by Counsel.

The Attorney-General said he had just come from a Colony where the court proceedings were conducted in the Greek and Turkish languages. There many convictions were recorded without a prisoner hearing the evidence, Counsel waiving the double interpretation. He

submitted that this was a question of procedure, not a point of law, and it was opening up a tremendous precedent. It simply meant that if three men were in the dock speaking different languages, interpreters would have to interpret in each dialect.

His Lordship—That is one of the penalties of empire. (To Mr. Calthrop) You can move to quash the verdict.

Mr. Calthrop—I don't think I can. The only thing is to state a case. This is a question of the admissibility of evidence.

His Lordship—I think the point is one that should be taken. I will reserve it for consideration and postpone sentence.

The Attorney-General—Reserve the point and pass sentence.

His Lordship—I cannot under this section.

The Attorney-General—I would ask your Lordship to record my objection—that this is not a point of law within the meaning of the section.

His Lordship—The second and third prisoner will go back to prison, and will come up when directed to receive judgment. I reserve the point. The first prisoner is discharged.

The Attorney-General—The point is not necessarily for the Full Court?

His Lordship—Yes.

IN SUMMARY JURISDICTION

BEFORE MR. H. H. J. GOMPERTZ
(ACTING PUISNE JUDGE).

CLAIM ON A PROMISSORY NOTE.

J. H. Pidgeon and A. Abraham were sued by Fung Chun for the recovery of \$271.13, balance due from the first defendant as the maker and from the second defendant as the guarantor of a promissory note for \$300 dated June 27th, 1906. The payment of this sum was expressed to be made in instalments of \$50 per month on July 1st, 1906.

Mr. D. V. Steavenson (of Messrs. Deacon, Looker and Deacon) appeared for the plaintiff, P. W. Goldring (of Messrs. Goldring, Barlow and Morrell) represented the first defendant, and the second defendant appeared in person and admitted his liability.

Mr. Goldring applied for a stay of proceedings, as the first defendant had filed a petition in bankruptcy.

His Lordship—You have no defence?

Mr. Goldring—No.

Mr. Steavenson objected to any stay of proceedings. This case was first brought into Court on December 22nd, and the first defendant had seen him and told him that arrangements were already being made with the creditors about a composition, and stated that he wanted the plaintiff to join in with the other creditors. It would have been better for him if he or his solicitor had approached the plaintiff and told him of the composition offered. Instead of doing that, he ignored the plaintiff entirely.

Mr. Goldring—The bankruptcy petition was only presented because of my friend's hostile attitude.

Mr. Steavenson—We were quite passive at the time.

His Lordship—If the petition is filed you cannot get execution.

Mr. Steavenson—I think I could, as it may be objected to.

His Lordship—Supposing you could? It would only increase the costs, and you could not get any money.

Mr. Steavenson—I submit I could.

Mr. Goldring I may mention that several executions have been issued against Mr. Pidgeon. In one case he was actually arrested by one of his creditors, an Indian of a most voracious kind, but this man gave in as he saw it was no use.

His Lordship (to Mr. Steavenson)—You want execution against Mr. Pidgeon?

Mr. Steavenson—I want judgment against both. I may issue execution against one or both defendants.

Mr. Goldring—I ask for a stay of execution.

Mr. Steavenson—This is a case in which my friend asks for a stay which the Court ought to grant. It is in the power of the Court to give judgment for the plaintiff, and arrangements regarding a stay can be made with the plaintiff. We have never been approached, and we do not know what composition is offered: I

feel certain that, if it was a proper scheme, we should have joined with the other creditors. Instead of that we have been put off and off, and now the defendant has filed his petition.

Mr. Goldring—The reason why the defendant went into bankruptcy was because this writ was issued against him.

His Lordship—The plaintiff was bound to issue a writ if the defendant did not approach him, but I feel disposed to grant the stay. What about the other debtor?

Mr. Goldring—I am not acting for him.

His Lordship—Will he be prejudiced in any way by your stay?

Mr. Goldring—I don't think so.

Mr. Steavenson—I think it would be putting the second defendant in a false position.

Mr. Goldring—What does the creditor think he is going to get? He cannot get anything. It is simply a question of personal spite. It is almost always the practice to grant a stay of execution.

Mr. Steavenson—As I explained to your Lordship when the week's adjournment was applied for, my client is being sued by his creditors, and it is necessary for him to get his money in.

Mr. Goldring—All they want is to put my client in jail; simply out of spite.

Mr. Steavenson—It does not pay to put a man in jail, if we have to pay for his maintenance.

His Lordship—I think I must grant a stay until Tuesday morning.

Mr. Steavenson—Why?

His Lordship—I don't see that it hurts you in any way unless you want to put this man in jail.

Mr. Steavenson—The Court does not, as a rule, protect the defendant.

His Lordship—I don't see why it should not.

Mr. Steavenson—If I am entitled to judgment I am entitled to the benefit of my judgment.

His Lordship—You are entitled to judgment, certainly.

Mr. Steavenson—We are pressed by our own creditors for payment. Had we been in affluent circumstances I don't suppose we should have called upon Mr. Pidgeon to pay up.

His Lordship—Personally I do not like to send a man to jail for debt unless there is some good reason.

Mr. Steavenson—I do not say we are going to send him.

His Lordship—It is strongly suggestive. I will grant a stay of execution until Tuesday morning.

AN UNWRITTEN CONTRACT.

The case concluded in which Messrs. Wilks and Jack, Ltd. sued the Yee Fat, of Wing Lok Street, to recover the sum of \$300 payable by the defendants for consultations with the plaintiffs as consulting engineers. Also for journeys to, and attendance at, Lantan Island, near Capuimoon Pass, and for advice with reference to lightering and raising the wreck of the s.s. *Eolus*.

Mr. M. J. D. Stephens represented the plaintiffs, and Mr. P. W. Goldring appeared for the defendants.

Mr. Goldring, in opening the defence, said the case practically turned on the question of the circumstances under which the services were said to have been rendered. The whole of the conversations took place through the medium of an interpreter, an engineer who was an old employee of Mr. Wilks, and who was at present in the employ of the defendants. The version of the defendants was that the whole of the work done was not to have been charged for. That to a certain extent was borne out by the plaintiffs themselves, and the go-between was possibly absolutely misunderstood. The point really on which the parties came to issue was as to whether or not any definite orders were given to engage the *David Gillies* and to repair the pump. All the conversation took place in pidgin English, and probably there was a misunderstanding. The defendants say they never gave any authority.

His Lordship—Is the man who acted as interpreter one of your people?

Mr. Goldring—Yes.

Mr. Stephens—On a visit to the wreck the defendants said it was necessary to have the tug, and Messrs. Wilks and Jack went to the Docks and ordered it. As we know Chinamen will talk any amount, but it amounts to nothing.

The more they talk they think they will gain some information, and probably they did in this case, and acted on it.

Lau Yuen Choi was called for the defence. He said he was an engineer on board the *Aolus*. He saw Mr. Jack at his office on or about August 23rd, and the latter asked him if the *Aolus* was all right. Witness replied that the vessel was aground, on a reef. He spoke in pidgin English. Mr. Jack asked why witness did not see him before, and he replied that he wished to get it off himself, if possible. He then asked how much Messrs. Wilks and Jack asked to shift her. They decided to go and inspect the vessel, nothing was said about the cost on that occasion. On the following day Messrs. Wilks and Jack went off with witness to the *Aolus*, and after surveying her, Mr. Jack said all the heavy work would have to be taken off the ship. Mr. Wilks said the boat could be pulled off with the Dock Company's tug. Witness said they would also have to get a wire rope, and he did not know who would pay for it, if it broke. Mr. Wilks said that was the Dock Company's business. Mr. Jack remarked that the pump on the vessel was too small, he would lend one, if they gave him a job. Witness did not ask Mr. Wilks to go to the Dock Company to inquire about the tug. At about eleven o'clock on the following day all the heavy gear was removed into junks from the *Aolus*. Then witness called on Mr. Wilks and asked him how much he wanted to save the wreck. He replied, "Suppose pull ship off I get good name: your master very much laugh, come off; everything finish, \$2,000. Suppose no come off your firm pay all expenses, about \$700." Witness made a counter offer of \$1000, but Mr. Jack said, "no good, Finish."

Cross-examined—Witness went twice to Mr. Wilks' office before he went to the wreck. When Mr. Wilks said he must get the pump ready, witness did not object, but he asked first what the charge would be. Permission was not given Mr. Wilks to order the tug: he was only asked the charge of it.

But Mr. Jack told you he would want the tug, didn't he?—Yes.

And you and your master went to him for advice?—Yes.

And acted on it?—Only as regards removing the heavy machinery from the vessel.

Did you agree to send your launch for the pump?—Yes, but the whole business fell through and I did not send it.

His Lordship in delivering judgment said he had to look at this matter as jury and ascertain what exactly took place and what should be paid for that which was done. It was not denied that the plaintiffs were entitled to something. In this case the go-between was a man on friendly terms with both parties, consequently matters were not conducted in the same business-like manner that they would have been between strangers. The whole thing was a further difficulty by reason of the fact that all the consultations were in pidgin English. His Lordship thought the first item, consultation for the floating of the steamer, a reasonable charge, and allowed it. With regard to item 2, \$125, the two plaintiffs themselves went out to the wreck, boarded it, and gave a considerable amount of advice. He could not treat the survey of a vessel lying in that peculiar position on the rocks on the same lines as a vessel lying in the harbour. Therefore, having in view the circumstances of the case and the fact that the plaintiffs were both experts, he thought \$125 a reasonable amount. With regard to the Dock tug his Lordship was not at all clear that the defendants gave any reasonable authority to the plaintiffs to engage it. They believed they would get the contract, and his Lordship thought, as they expected it, they made arrangements. Therefore the amount of \$75 would be disallowed. There was no doubt that the defendants did contemplate the pump going off to the wreck, but again, the pulsometer would have been got ready in any case. He thought he would be doing equal justice if he halved the amount of \$50. As to the last consultation regarding the rates quoted, looking at the case all round, he thought that this item ought not to be allowed. Judgment would therefore be entered for the plaintiff for \$175, and costs. The defendants only had themselves to blame for not being more business like.

H.M.S. "KING ALFRED" AT SAIGON.

The British Admiral's flagship, the *King Alfred* has recently been cruising in French waters, and the visit to Indo-China has been made the occasion of festivities and friendly greetings. On December 15th the flagship arrived at Kamranh Bay and Sir Hedworth Lambton was cordially received and shown the interesting places of the locality. Later the *King Alfred* sailed to Saigon, where on behalf of the Government of Cochin-China, a banquet was tendered to Admiral Lambton. M. Outrey, inspector of the Civil Services, represented the Lieutenant-Governor who was absent. After expressing regret for the absence of his chief, he said the French colony was happy to salute so distinguished an officer of the British navy. He followed this by asking the company to drink "to the health of His Majesty King Edward, to the closer union of the two great nations, to you, admiral, to the officers and crew of the English cruiser *King Alfred*." Admiral Lambton, in response, said he was sincerely touched by the warm welcome received on landing at Saigon, and for this he wished to tender thanks to the Governor-General and the Lieutenant-Governor. He also expressed the hope that the union between the two great European nations of France and England would become more fruitful. He concluded by proposing the healths of the President of the French Republic, the Governor-General and the Lieutenant-Governor of Cochin-China and Mr. Inspector Outrey. The Admiral and the Officers afterwards proceeded to the theatre to witness a representation of *Herodiade*.

FOR EASTERN TELEGRAMS.

JAPAN'S SYMPATHY WITH ITALY

Tokyo, January 6th.

The Red Cross Society of Japan is opening a national earthquake fund for the relief of the sufferers in Italy.

Baron Komura, Minister of Foreign Affairs, convened a private meeting to-day at the Foreign Office, and Yen 70,000 was subscribed on the spot.

The Mitsui, the Mitsu Bishi and the Bank of Japan have each contributed Yen 10,000 to the fund.

JAPAN AND THE SITUATION IN CHINA.

Tokyo, January 6th.

The Japanese Press is confident that the situation in China will be undisturbed by Yuan Shih-Kai's removal from office.

While regretting his loss as a friend to Japan, the leading papers express the opinion that the negotiations on pending questions between the two countries will suffer no check.

The Foreign Office is silent on the matter.

JAPAN AND ITALY.

Tokyo, January 7th.

The House of Representatives has telegraphed a message of sympathy to the Italian Government expressing sympathy with nation in the recent terrible calamity.

A Relief Fund has been started among members of the House.

THE STRAITS OPIUM REPORT.

Singapore, January 6th.

Official authority has been given to-day for the publication of the Report of the Straits Commission on the Opium Question.

The Japanese paper *Nichi Nichi* reports that a new bleaching process has been discovered whereby it is claimed that wild silk (more popularly known as *pongee*) can be bleached to milk white and dyed to the most subtle shade of colour, making it quite possible to produce a most excellent imitation of real China silk at a greatly reduced cost.

CHINESE IMPERIAL EDICTS.

On December 31st the court at Peking issued a number of edicts affecting the position of certain officials.

DISMISSAL OF YUAN SHIH KAI.

The first decree issued stated that Yuan Shih Kai had held the important posts of Grand Secretary and President of the Board of Foreign Affairs under the late Emperor. An officer of such great ability and holding posts of such responsibility should render assistance to the Throne; but on account of sore feet Yuan moved with great difficulty. Being thus unable to take charge of affairs he would be relieved of his office at once, and would return to his native village and endeavour to cure himself.

This edict was written and despatched by the Regent, and Yuan Shih Kai was not given an opportunity of resigning.

A later edict has been issued appointing Liang Tung Yen as Acting President of the Board of Foreign Affairs.

NA TUNG.

Another edict issued appoints Na Tung, Assistant Grand Secretary, to be a member of the Grand Council.

POSTHUMOUS HONOURS.

A third edict issued eulogised the good work done by the deceased statesman, Wang Wen Shao, and promised the appointment of his son and grandson to important official positions.

His son, who is now secretary to the Board of Works and Agriculture, is to be made a *taotai*, and a more important appointment than he now holds is to be made for the grandson, who is now expectant *taotai* of Kiangsu Province.

COMMERCIAL.

IMPORTS.—

RICE.

HONGKONG, 8th January:—The upward tendency continues, market being brisk.

Quotations are:—

Saigon, Ordinary	\$5.90	to	5.95
" Round, Good quality	\$5.50	to	\$5.60
" Long	5.75	to	5.80
Siam, Field mill cleaned, No. 2	\$5.70	to	5.85
" Garden, " No. 1	5.45	to	5.50
" White,	\$5.65	to	5.70
" Fine Cargo	5.70	to	5.75

OPIUM.

HONGKONG, Jan. 7th—Since the 24th ultimo movements in the various Opium markets have been as follows:—

Malwa, Patna, Benares, Persia				
Stocks on the 24th Dec., 1908 —	758½	3,020	1,270	1,131
Dec. 24th Imports per Assaye	—	—	—	120
" 29th " " C. Apcar	—	550	110	—
Jan. 4th " " Sydney	—	50	60	—
" 6th " " Delhi	—	—	—	75
	758½	3,220	1,440	1,326
Less Exports to Shanghai ..	—	75	75	—
Less Exports to East and West Coast Ports including Local Consumption for the fortnight ..	104	471	392	148
Estimated Stocks this day ..	654½	2,074	1,013	1,180

Bengal.—There has been a considerable improvement in deliveries and consequently greater activity in the market. Prices have advanced to \$1135. for N. Patna, \$1155 for Old Patna and \$1070. for New Banarès.

Malwa.—A sale of new drug has been reported at \$1110.

COAL.

HONGKONG, Jan. 2nd.—The arrivals of coal since the 24th Dec. 1908 amounted to 46,700 tons Japanese 8,900 tons Hongay and 5,500 tons Australian. The coal expected is 44,700 tons Japanese, 5,900 tons Australian 10,100 tons Hongay and 4,800 tons Borneo. Quotations according to Messrs. Hughes and Hough's circular are as follows:—

Cardiff	\$23.50	to	\$ —	ex-godown, sellers.
Australian	\$12.50	ex-godown, sellers.		
Yubari Lump	\$12.00	Nominal.		
Miiki Lump	\$10.50	to	\$11.00	ex-sh. p. nominal.
Moji Lump	\$7.75	to	\$9.50	ex-ship, steady.
Moji Unscreened	\$6.00	to	\$8.00	ex-ship, steady.
Akaike Lump	\$8.75	to	\$9.00	ex-ship, steady.
Labuan Lump	\$9.00	ex-ship, sellers.		

YARN.

HONGKONG.—Mr. P. Eduljee, in his Report dated 8th January, states:—Quietness has been the prevailing feature of the past fortnight and only a very small business has been done at more or less easier rates. Owing to the improvement in exchange importers appear to be anxious sellers and will meet the market in a reasonable extent. If any large quantity could be placed, but dealers are indifferent and in the absence of any outlet for their purchases are not inclined to increase their holdings or interests. The sales noted below were effected in the earlier portion of the interval and have been entirely confined to best spinnings of No. 10s and 12s. For the past few days there has been nothing doing and the business of this native year may be considered to have almost come to an end, pending the revival for clearance after China New Year. The market close quiet and unsteady. Bombay continues strong. Sales of the interval aggregates 1,455 bales, arrivals amount to 6,950 bales, unsold stock estimated at 20,000 and sold but uncleared bales in second hands at 18,000 bales. Local Manufacture.—No business is reported. Japanese Yarn.—Nothing doing. Raw Cotton.—Indian descriptions are unsteady with a fair enquiry for superfine Bengals of which about 350 bales have changed hands at \$25 to \$24½. About 100 bales China Cotton have found buyers at \$29. Estimated stocks. Indian 675 bales and China 390 bales. Quotations are Indian \$22 to \$29 and China \$26 to \$29. Exchange on India has now taken an upward turn and closes steady to-day at Rs. 131½ for T/T and Rs. 132½ for Post. On Shanghai 75½ and on Japan 86. The undernoted business in imported and local spinnings is reported from Shanghai during the fortnight ended the 29th ultimo.—viz.—Indian.—Notwithstanding the holidays about 2,500 bales have been sold at steady to firm prices. Estimated unsold stock landing and in godown about 16,000 bales. Japanese.—The business of the fortnight comprises the sales about 2,000 bales on the basis of Tls. 95 to 105 for No. 16s and Tls. 102½ to Tls. 112½ for No. 20s. In addition to the above about 4,000 bales have been contracted for delivery up to the end of March next. Local.—Are in very good demand and forward contracts to the extent of 20,000 bales have been made at Tls. 81½ to 82½ for No. 10s Tls. 82½ to 88½ for No. 12s Tls. 84½ to 90½ for No. 14s and Tls. 84½ to 90½ for No. 16.

PIECE GOODS.

Messrs. Noel, Murray & Co. in their latest Piece Goods Report, dated Shanghai 24th December state:—The year just closing will always be remembered as being chiefly occupied in "cleaning" up the over importations during 1905-1907. Although the latter year taken by itself, could not be called one of excessive import, yet in face of the enormous stocks remaining over in China from 1906, the fresh supplies, especially in many classes of British goods, were quite up to, and in some instances in fact greater than the off-take during that year. Thus stocks were left at the end larger than they were at the commencement of the period, though it must be remarked that this was chiefly in the more fanciful fabrics which had to be ordered sometimes as much as eighteen months ahead. It was fortunate that with American goods during 1907 the imports most abnormally small not 20 per cent of the previous year, which allowed the stocks to be reduced about 60 per cent notwithstanding an appreciable decrease in the consumption. That decrease has continued during the current year, while importation have increased, so that stocks at the close are disappointingly large. Whether or not Japanese competition has actually and permanently succeeded in cutting out the American domestics remains to be seen, but it would appear, on the face of it, that the trade has received a very severe set back. The enormous amount of competition that has developed during the past three or four years has played sad havoc with the trade inducing, as it has, the introduction of dangerous methods into the business for the purpose of securing orders. Gambling in Exchange has been the most obnoxious of these, and although it may have saved the situation in many cases, it has done a lot of harm to the trade generally and should not be encouraged. The easy way in which Tom, Dick and Harry have been allowed to book orders to almost unlimited amounts in the past, without the slightest security or guarantee of any reputable party, does not reflect much credit on the business acumen of traders here, and it is to be hoped that greater precautions will be taken in future, not only to actually identify the individual being dealt with, but to find out his commercial standing

and credit. The neglect of this, and granting too much license, without the slightest *quid pro quo*, has brought the trade to the verge of ruin, and it will require very energetic methods to put it on its feet again. Certainly during the past twelve or eighteen months the fates have been against this market, but it must be remembered that it was not due to the efforts of any one here, or anything appertaining to the markets of China, that had stayed off the evil day as long as it has, and how much better would it have been if circumstances had been different. Until "reform" is properly and thoroughly in possession of this country the trade can never be on a safe basis. The Currency must be reformed and a proper Banking system introduced. Taxation must be justly and equitably levied. Railway communication and transportation must be developed and be unhampered by illegitimate squeezes. Even then there will always be the two uncontrollable factors. Exchange and the cost of the raw material to face, so what right or reason has any one to order goods to supply a demand which a dealer thinks may spring up twelve months hence! The, so to speak, sorting out that has been in process the greater part of this year has done a great deal to clear the situation, but there still remains a lot to be done, and it is therefore some satisfaction that the home markets have not lent themselves to indiscriminate exploitation. Supplies of Manchester staple makes have, in spite of the poor prospects of profitable results, been kept fully up to the consumptive demand, and consequently the stocks to be carried over are again abnormally heavy. This is the more unfortunate in view of the now almost certainty of an excessive supply of raw cotton, though whether the altered conditions of production and manufacture will allow goods to be put out at appreciable cheaper prices remains to be seen. Cotton at the close certainly shows a depreciation of over 20% since the commencement of the year, with only a set-off of about 10% in Exchange, so that the actual first cost of production can reasonably be expected to be on a lower scale. The Fancy piece goods trade has unquestionably been the most disastrous, and in spite of the free selling, at absolutely give away prices, there still remains in stock sufficient for the requirements of the next six or eight months, the bulk of it being indents left on the hands of the unfortunate Importers, so there is little encouragement to send forth fresh orders, even if replacing cost were obtainable. Prints seem to be gradually going out of favour, the natives now preferring coloured woven goods. The most noticeable development in the trade is in Fast Black Cotton Italians, the demand for which has been so well catered for by the regular Thursday Auction, but no doubt the extremely low prices holders have had to accept for a really good article has materially increased the consumption. However, up to date the re-exports, including the estimate for Local consumption, only show an increase of 85,000 pieces, or nearly 17% during this latter half year over the average off-take for the same period of the past four years, but the first half year certainly showed an increase of 70% over the average of the previous four years. With the exception of English Jeans, which exceed the average off-take by 17% only, three other items show an increase, namely, Dutch Jeans about 7%. Velvets and Velvetens 6% and Medium and Broad Cloths 10%. Other English Grey goods show a decrease of 23% below the average, white Shirtings nearly 22%, Prints 32%, Turkey Reds 36% and Dyed Goods 40%. With American Goods the deficiency is much more serious, Drills being 60% under the average, Sheetings 50%, Jeans 49% and Cotton Flannels 17%. The off-take of Woollens has also been under the average considerably, and Indian Yarn 24% and Japanese 50%, while Local Spinings have been exported to the extent of exactly double the average quantity of the last four years. The lesser import of Indian and Japanese Yarns has, however, reduced the stocks very satisfactorily in spite of the smaller off-take. The question now arises has the enormous decrease in the consumption of Foreign Imports, indicated above, been made up by other goods, or is the Country bare of stocks? The first few days of the interval were occupied by the usual Christmas holidays, business being practically suspended. That is so far a fresh business was concerned, but the clearing of steamers for Corea and Chingwantao gave a little flip to deliveries. On the resumption of business on the 28th inst. it was found Silver had advanced rather unexpectedly, the rise being subsequently more than sustained. Although of comparatively little moment it appears to have exerted a very favour-

able influence on the trade, if the only material effect so far has not extended much beyond the enquiry stage. There is certainly more disposition to put forward business propositions, and this in some cases has resulted in contracts being made for goods to arrive during February and March, and also a few indents for goods, for shipment during those months. These have been chiefly in the staple Manchester makes but we have heard of at least one or two forward transactions in American as well. The news from Newchwang is very promising. The crops have been magnificent, and, as noted above, fairly free shipments are still being sent from this. The Tientsin merchants are still hesitating, but now second hand stocks are getting low the opportunity of picking up cheap cargo, which they have apparently been looking for, should very soon disappear. The Szechuen men have not yet invested the money sent to them for purchases here, the prices they offer being quite unacceptable. The Hankow trade is dragging, being greatly hampered by the stringency in the money market and consequent general want of financial facilities and credit. The lower Yangtze Ports seem to take their cue from Hankow to a some extent, though the effect of the good crops generally should show a more independent revival in the country trade generally in the near future. Exchange should certainly have helped the export trade considerably and the result will probably be seen by the better demand for Imports after China New Year. This is only three weeks ahead, being unusually early—the 22nd January—and its influence is already being felt, though the trade settlements have been practically arranged. Still it retards cash transactions, and already the Auction prompts are being extended over that date. Native interest still remains comparatively easy, but that does not mean that financial facilities are less hard to obtain. It is not quite realised yet what the financial situation will be when business is resumed after the native annual settling day, but it is anticipated credit will be much curtailed by the Native Banks. It is understood that through the representations of the Foreign Ministers in Peking the danger to trade threatened by the promiscuous issue of unauthorised Bank notes will be removed in the near future. The Manchester market is firmer and in some classes of goods quotations are distinctly higher. There is reason to believe, however, that some buying has been done for this market, though we are inclined to doubt that it is of any extent. Cotton has opened in Liverpool at a higher level after the holidays, Mid American being quoted 4.99d spot and 4.77d February/March, Egyptian remaining steady at 8½d. The New York price for Maron has at the same time risen to 8.82 cents. The market for domestics is firm as a rule, though here and there it seems possible to pick up cheap parcels occasionally, an instance this week being 1,250 bales Buffalo L L 4 yard Sheetings at 7s. 9d. (c.i.f.) A further purchase is 500 bales Buffalo A 3 yard Sheetings at 9s. 4½d. which is not quite so favourable. There is still no very fixed opinion as to the probable size of the Cotton crop, though popular opinion seems to be in the neighbourhood of 13½ million bales. There is only a fair enquiry for Yarn at the prices wanted by holders and consequently business has not shown much development. The Cotton market is quiet with prices practically unchanged. As regards actual transactions it is difficult to glean any particulars, but we understand a miscellaneous business is passing, but on quite a retail scale from first hands, 8-4-lbs. Shirtings are wanted for Corea, but the dealers appear able to supply the demand. For that market there is no enquiry for the favorite 10-lbs. makes at present Silver Sycee 8-4-lbs. Shirtings have been sold by the Importer at Tls. 2.90 for prompt delivery, and 3.600 pieces 8 Friends at Tls. 3.05. In White Shirtings 1,000 pieces 4 Bos and Fireworks have been taken at T4.90. In American goods Sheetings have been resold at T5.00 for Buck's Head, and T4.72½ for Abbeville, T4.67½ for Loray A, and 30 yard Pepperell Jeans at Tls. 3.85. In lighter weight Shirtings 150 bales 4 and 4.70 yard have been sold at Tls. 900 and Tls. 345 respectively. The tone of the market is strong and deliveries improving. The supply under the control of the dealers is rapidly dwindling. At the Yuen Fong Auction on Christmas Eve the Grey goods did not show much change one way or the other, the differences in most cases being a mere fraction. While Shirtings were on the whole slightly firmer, and the same can be said of Irishes—with T-loths the tendency was slightly lower, as also Jeans, and Turkey Reds Strong, but scarcely so at subsequent sales. The lower qualities of Fast Black

Cotton Italians realised better prices with some consistency, but the better makes and Venetians sold irregularly. At the E-woo sale this morning, still for delivery this year, in Shirting, the 7-lbs. and commoner 8-lbs. were inclined to drop, but the better qualities of these, and heavier makes, were slightly firmer, with the exception of two chops of 12 lbs. which declined rather heavily. White Shirtings and T-Cloths were firmer, Jeans weak, with exception of the heaviest, and Venetians firmer. Camlets are inclined to be easier. Lastings and Long Ells fairly steady and Spanish Stripes irregular, though some chops during the week have shown fairly firm prices.

HONGKONG PRICES CURRENT.

HONGKONG, 8th January, 1909.

COTTON PIECE GOODS—

Grey Shirtings—8 lbs. piece	\$1.85	\$—
7 lbs. "	2.25 to 2.55	
8.4 lbs. "	2.80 to 4.05	
10 lbs. "	4.15 to 5.40	
White Shirtings—54/56 reed ..	2.65 to 3.85	
58/60 " ..	3.85 to 5.95	
64/66 " ..	6.10 to 7.15	
Fine ..	8.05 to 9.15	
Book-folds ..	3.15 to 6.15	
Victoria Lawns—12 yards ...	0.50 to 2.00	
T-Cloths—6 lbs. (32 in.) Ord'y ..	9.95 to 2.20	
7 lbs. "	2.25 to 3.3	
8 lbs. "Mexicans..	2.70 to 3.80	
7 lbs. "	3.20 to 4.20	
Drills, English—40 yds., 13 1/2 to 14 lbs. }	4.40 to 5.40	

FANCY COTTONS—

Turkey Red Shirtings—1 1/2 to 6 lbs. piece	\$1.87 1/2 to \$4.20	
Brocades—Dyed	yard 0.11 to 0.15	
Chinese—Assorted	" 0.09 to 0.15	
Velvets—Black, 22 in.,	" 0.25 to 0.55	
Velveteens—18 in.,	" 0.23 to 0.29	
Handkerchiefs—Imitation }	0.50 to 2.00	
Silk per dozen		

WOOLLENS—

Spanish Stripes—Sundry chops	yard \$0.70 to \$2.00	
German,	" 0.80 to 0.70	
Habit, Medium & Broad Cloths, ..	" 1.25 to 3.00	
Long Ells—Scarlet, 7-9 lbs. piece	8.25 to 9.50	
Assorted	" 8.40 to 9.65	
Camlets—Assorted	" 12.00 to 31.00	
Lastings—30 yds. 31 inches }	13.00 to 19.00	
Assorted	" 10.00 to 12.00	
Orleans—Plain	" 10.00 to 12.00	
Blankets—8 to 12	lbs. 0.65 to 1.50	

RAW COTTON—

Bombay	picul \$23.00 to \$25.00	
Bengal (New), Rangoon		
and Dacca	" 23.00 to 25.00	
Shanghai and Japanese ..	" 24.00 to 27.00	
Tungchow and Ningpo ..	" 24.00 to 27.00	

METALS—

Iron—Nail Rod	picul \$ 4.20	
Square, Flat, Round Bar (Eng.)...	" 4.10	
Swedish Bar	" 4.25	
Small Round Rod	" 4.50	
Hoop, 4 to 11 1/2 in.,	" 5.60	
Wire, 16/25 oz.,	" 9.40	
Old Wire Rope	" 3.00	

EXPORTS:—

CAMLETS.

HONGKONG, 8th January.—There has been no sale, price \$83.50—\$84.50.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPORTS.

Messrs Arnhold, Karberg & Co.'s Fortnightly Produce Circular, dated Shanghai, 31st Dec. 1908 state: Gallnuts.—Little inquiry. Usual Gallnuts somewhat easier. Cowhides.—Market quiet. Orders from home are on a lower level of prices. As Exchange is advancing at the same time business is difficult. Feathers.—Home markets do not show much interest and very little business is being done. Cotton.—Market very strong and advancing, making business with Europe impossible. Tallow.—Prices very firm, owing to small arrivals. Prospects of business poor. Strawbraid.—Laichow Mottled in all widths is in demand and stocks are small. Loyer and Kwangchow white have rise further. No demand for other kinds. Wool.—Sheeps.—Merchants ask exaggerated prices, in consequence of which business is at a standstill. Wood Oil.—Hardly any offers are obtainable as arrivals are very small. Antimony.—Market firm. Small supplies owing to the continued low water in the Upper Yangtze.

Per M. M. steamer *Ernest Simons*, sailed on 5th January 1909.—For Lyon 45 bales raw silk, for Barcelona 20 cases silk piece goods. For Bordeaux 2 cases blackwood. For Valencia 5 bales raw silk. For Marseilles 69 bales raw silk, 7 cases porcelain, 1 case silver ware, 20 cases pumjums, 4 cases silk piece goods, 11 cases human hair, 10 cases essential oil, 2 cases feathers, 1 case hemp, 2 cases cigars. For London 3 cases silk piece goods, 2 cases ginger.

HONGKONG SHARE QUOTATIONS.

HONGKONG, 8th January 1909.—Notwithstanding the New Year holidays a fair business has been transacted during the week under review, and although rates have not improved they close steady generally, with but few declensions. Considering the near approach of the China New Year, this venture to think may be taken as a good sign and as a harbinger of a satisfactory start for the new year. Sterling exchange, concurrent with the rise in silver has ruled firmer and closes at 1/9 1/16 for T. T. On Shanghai the closing rate is 75 1/2.

BANKS.—H. & Shanghai presumably on account of the higher sterling exchange have ruled rather quieter, and after further sales at 845 have changed hands at 840. The London rate remaining the same at £82.10. The market closes steady at the rate with an inclination to rise.

MARINE INSURANCES.—Unions after further sales at 835 have weakened and sales are reported at 825, closing however with buyers at the latter rate, and apparently with no sellers. Other stocks under this heading call for no special notice.

FIRE INSURANCES.—Hongkongs remain unchanged and without business. Chinas after further sales at 106 close with sellers at that rate.

SHIPPING.—Hongkong Canton & Macao with a subsidence of the threatened "Fatsan" boycott movement have ruled firmer and sales have taken place at 29 1/2, the market closing more of a buying than a selling one at that rate and with some prospects of a further rise. Douglas's continue in a small demand at 33 without bringing any further shares on the market. Shells have declined to 45/ ex coupon No. 11 of 1 sh. paid in London on January 1st. New Star Ferrys are still enquired for at 15, and China and Manilas still on offer at 14, both without business.

REFINERIES.—We have nothing to report under this heading, the market remaining unchanged and without business.

MINING.—Raubs in the early part of the week fell considerably, and sales were effected as low as 7 1/2, at time of closing however, a reaction seems to have set in and buyers rule the market at 8 1/2. At 9 however shares are on offer without finding buyers.

DOCKS, WHARVES AND GODOWNS.—Hongkong & Whampoa Docks after reported sales at 88 have shown signs of recovery and at time of closing sales are reported at 90 at which latter rate shares could still be placed. Kowloon Wharfs have found willing buyers at 45 during the week, and sales are reported at 46, at time of closing a few shares are obtainable at the latter rate, but at the former an unsatisfied demand still exists. Shanghai Docks have improved, after the payment of the dividend of Tls. 2 1/2 to 77, while Hongkew Wharfs have declined to 135 in the North and to 136 with sales locally.

LANDS, HOTELS AND BUILDINGS.—Hongkong Lands with continued sellers at 92 have been placed at 91 1/2, closing with further buyers at the latter rate. Hotels have improved to 85 with buyers and no sales. We have nothing further to report under this heading.

COTTON MILLS.—Ewos are quoted in the North at 79. Further than this we have no advices of any changes.

MISCELLANEOUS.—Bells Asbestos are enquired for at 8 1/2. China Prov. have buyers at 9 1/2, with a few shares on offer at 10. Cements have been the medium of a fairly large business at 9.80 and 9.70, closing with sellers at the former rate. Union Water Boats and Ropes have changed hands at quotation, both closing steady at the close. Langkats have declined to 850. We have nothing further to reported under this heading.

Quotations are as follows:—

STOCKS	PAID UP	QUOTATIONS
Banks—		
Hongkong & S'hai...	all	\$840
National B. of China	28	London £92.10
		\$51
Marine Insurance—		
Canton	\$50	\$195, sellers
China Traders	\$25	\$87 1/2, buyers
North China	25	Tls. 104, buyers
Union	\$100	\$825, buyers
Yangtze	\$60	\$167 1/2
Fire Insurance—		
China Fire	20	\$106, sales & sel.
Hongkong Fire	50	\$325, sellers
Docks & Wharves—		
H. & W. Dock	all	\$90, sales & sellers
Fenwick & Co., Geo	\$25	\$12, sellers
New Amoy Dock ...	\$6 1/2	\$9 1/2, buyers
Shanghai Dock and Eng. Co., Ltd.	Tls. 100	Tls. 77, x.d.
Steamship Companies		
China and Manila...	\$25	\$14, sellers
Douglas Steamship	all	\$33, buyers
H. Canton & M. ...	\$15	\$29 1/2, sales
Indo-China S. N. Co.	all	\$97, sellers
		\$17, sellers
Star Ferry	\$10	\$24
	\$5	\$15, buyers
Shell Transport Co.	21	47/-, x.d.
Taku Tug & L. Co. ...	Tls. 50	Tls. 47 1/2
S'hai Tug & L. Co. ...	Tls. 50	Tls. 48 1/2
Do. Preference		Tls. 51 1/2
Refineries—		
China Sugar	all	\$112 1/2, sellers
Luzon Sugar	all	\$18, sellers
Perak Sugar Cult...	Tls. 50	Tls. 90
Wharves—		
H. & K. Wharf & G.	all	\$45
S'hai & H. Wharf...	Tls. 100	Tls. 136
Land and Buildings—		
H'kong Land Invest.	100	\$91 1/2, buyers
Shanghai Land	Tls. 50	Tls. 120
Kowloon Land & B.	\$30	\$33, sellers
Wei-hai-wei Land } and Building...	Tls. 25	Tls. 9
Humphrey's Estate	all	\$9 1/2
West Point Building	\$50	\$46, sellers
Tramways—		
The Peak Tramways	all	\$14
	\$1	\$2
Mining—		
Charbonnages	all	\$590, buyers
Raubs	18/10	\$8 1/2
Hotels Etc—		
Hongkong Hotel Co.	all	\$35, buyers
Astor House Hotel	\$25	\$18
Dispensaries—		
Watson & Co., A. S.	\$10	\$9 1/2
Watkins, Ltd.	\$10	\$2, buyers
Lighting—		
Hongkong & C. Gas	all	\$200
Shanghai Gas Co.	Tls. 50	Tls. 120
Hongkong Electric...	\$10	\$18, buyers
Miscellaneous—		
G. Island Cement.	10	\$9.80, sellers
H. K. Milling Co., Ltd.	\$100	Nominal
Bell's Asbestos E. A.	12/6	\$8 1/2, buyers
United Asbestos ...	\$4	\$1 1/2
	\$10	\$280
Union Waterboat Co.	\$10	\$10, sales
H'kong Dairy Farm	\$4	\$22 1/2, sellers
Hongkong Ice Co.	all	\$220, sellers
Robinson Piano Co.	\$50	\$59, sellers
S'hai Waterworks Co.	\$20	Tls. 437 1/2
H'kong M. Rope Co.	all	\$24, sales
Hongkong C. S. Co.	\$10	\$9, buyers
Ewo Cotton S. & W.	Tls. 5	Tls. 79
International	Tls. 75	Tls. 67 1/2
Laou Kung Mow ...	Tls. 10	Tls. 73
Soychee	Tls. 500	Tls. 285
China Provident ...	\$10	\$9 1/2, buyers
China-Borneo Co.	\$12	\$11, sales
Campbell, M & Co.	all	\$9, buyers
Wm. Powell, Ltd. ...	\$7	\$4, sellers
South China M. Post	\$25	\$24, buyers
China Light & P. Co.	\$10	\$5 1/2, sellers
	\$1	
Steam Laundry Co.	\$5	\$5, sellers
Weissmann, Ltd.	\$100	\$150
Cigar Companies—		
Philippine Co., Ltd.	\$10	\$8, sellers
Ahambra, Ltd.	\$50	Nominal

VERNON & SMYTH, Brokers.

SHANGHAI SHARE QUOTATIONS.

2nd January, 1909.

COMPANY.	PAID UP.	QUOTATION.
Banks:—		
Hongkong & S'hai...	\$125	\$865, sellers
National of China...	28	\$51, buyers
Russo-Chinese ...	R187½	Tls. 175, sellers
	T125	
Insurance:—		
Union Society C'ton	\$100	\$810, buyers
North-China	25	Tls. 102½, buyers
Yangtze Assn. ...	\$60	\$175, buyers
Canton	\$50	\$225, sellers
Hongkong Fire.....	\$50	\$812½, buyers
China Fire.....	\$20	\$105, sales
Shipping:—		
Indo - China { pref. } { def. }	210	Tls. 37, sellers
Shell Trans. { ord. }	21	\$25.0, sellers
& Trading { pref. }	10	\$29.10, sellers
S'hai Tug & { ord. }		Tls. 47½, sales
Lighter ... { pref. }	T50	Tls. 51½, buyers
Taku Tug & Lighter	T50	Tls. 48, sellers
Kochien Transport- ation & Tow Boat	T50	Tls. 50, sellers
Docks & Wharves:—		
S'hai Dock & Erg...	T100	Tls. 75, buyers
H. & W. Dock	\$100	\$91, sellers
S. & H'kew Wharf...	T100	Tls. 141, buyers
H. K'loon W. & G...	\$50	\$45, sellers
Yangtze	T100	Tls. 217½, sellers
Sugar Companies:—		
Perak Cultivation...	T50	Tls. 90, buyers
China Refining.....	\$100	\$132½, sellers
Mining:—		
Raub Australian ...	21	\$8, sellers
Chinese Eng. & Min.	18/10	
	21	Tls. 174, buyers
Lands:—		
S'hai Investment...	T50	Tls. 120, sellers
H'kong Investment	\$100	\$93, sellers
Humphreys' Estate	\$10	\$104, sellers
Weihaiwei	T25	\$9, sellers
China	T50	Tls. 50, sellers
Anglo-French	T100	Tls. 100, buyers
Cotton:—		
Ewo.....	T50	Tls. 76 buyers
International	T75	Tls. 67½, buyers
Laou Kung Mow	T100	Tls. 73, sellers
Soy Chee	T500	Tls. 235, buyers
H'kong C. S. W. D.	\$10	\$9, buyers
Industrial:—		
Shanghai Gas	T50	Tls. 120, buyers
Major Brothers	T50	Tls. 50, sellers
Shanghai Ice.....	T25	Tls. 14, sellers
China Flour Mill...	T50	Tls. 37½, buyers
S'hai Pulp & Paper	T100	Tls. 45, sellers
Green Is. Cement...	\$10	\$9½, sales
Maatschappij, &c., in Langkat.....	Gs. 100	Tls. 860, buyers
Shanghai - Sumatra Tobacco	T20	Tls. 125 buyers
S'hai Waterworks...	220	T. 437½, sales
Anglo-Ger. Brewery	100	\$85, buyers
A. Butler Cement, Tile Works	50	\$25, sellers
Kalumpang Rubber	50	Tls. 60, buyers
S. Eber Estates	\$100	Tls. 90, sellers
Eastern Fibre	10	
Shanghai Electric Construction	210	\$8.00 buyers
Miscellaneous:—		
Hall & Holtz.....	\$20	\$21, buyers
A. Llewellyn	\$60	\$52, buyers
A. S. Watson & Co.	\$10	\$11½, sellers
Central Ordinary ...	\$15	\$14½, buyers
Central Founders...	\$15	\$400, buyers
S. Moutrie & Co.	\$50	\$45, sales
Weeks & Co.	\$20	\$25, sellers
Astor House Hotel	\$25	\$16, sellers
Hongkong Hotel ...	\$50	\$98, sellers
Hotel des Colonies	T12.50	Tls. 6, sellers
Tsingtao Hotel Co.	\$100	nominal
Lane, Crawford & Co.	100	\$152½, buyers
Dunning & Co.	50	\$47½, sellers
S'hai Horse Bazar...	T60	Tls. 40, sales
S'hai Mercury	T50	Tls. 50, sellers
S'hai Mutual Tele.	T50	Tls. 59, buyers
China Im. & Ex.		
Lumber	T100	Tls. 83, sellers
Shanghai Electric & Asbestos	\$25	\$23, sellers
Dallas Horse Re- pository	T50	Tls. 25, sellers
Printing Co.	T50	Tls. 50, sellers

J. P. BISSET & Co.

EXCHANGE.

HONGKONG, January 8th

LONDON.—	
Telegraphic Transfer	1/9½
Bank Bills, on demand	1/9½
Bank Bills, at 30 days' sight	1/9½
Bank Bills at 4 months' sight	1/9½
Credits, at 4 months' sight	1/9½
Documentary Bills, 4 months' sight	1/9½
ON PARIS.— Bank Bills, on demand	221
Credits 4 months' sight	225½
ON GERMANY.— On demand	180
ON NEW YORK.— Bank Bills, on demand	42½
Credits, 60 days' sight	44
ON BOMBAY.— Telegraphic Transfer	131½
Bank, on demand	132½
ON CALCUTTA.— Telegraphic Transfer	131½
Bank on demand	132½
ON SHANGHAI.— Bank, at sight	75½
Private, 30 days' sight	76½
ON YOKOHAMA.— On demand	86
ON MANILA.— On demand	86½
ON SINGAPORE.— On demand	75½
ON BATAVIA.— On demand	106½
ON HAIPHONG.— On demand	8½ p.c. pm.
ON SAIGON.— On demand	8½ p.c. pm.
ON BANGKOK.— On demand	90½
FOREIGNERS, Bank's Buying Rate	\$11.20
GOLD LEAF 100 fine, per tael	\$59.60
BAR SILVER per oz	23½

SUBSIDIARY COINS.

		percent discount
Chinese	20 cents pieces ..	\$4.30
"	10 " "	5.40
Hongkong	20 " "	3.80
"	10 " "	3.90

TONNAGE.

HONGKONG 8th January.—There has been a limited demand for tonnage during the period under review. From Saigon to Hongkong, 14 cents per picul offering; to Philippines, 22 cents last; to Java, 24 cents. The new crop is now ready for shipment. From Tairen to Canton, 25 cents last. Coal freights are weaker. From South Japan coal port to Swatow, \$1.90; to Hongkong, \$1.40; Singapore, \$2.50; Hongay, \$1.80. From Fulo Laut to Hongkong, \$2.25.

SHIPPING.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES SINCE LAST MAIL.

December:—	ARRIVALS.
31, Amigo, German str., from Haiphong.	
31, Batoum, Br. str., from Singapore.	
31, Choyssang, British str., from Shanghai.	
31, Esang, British str., from Weihaiwei.	
31, Hong Wan I, Br. str., from Singapore.	
31, Kanchow, British str., from Shanghai.	
31, Keongwei, German str., from Singapore.	
31, Signal, German str., from Haiphong.	
31, Yochow, British str., from Shanghai.	
January:—	
1, Childar, Norwegian str., from Swatow.	
1, E. of India, British str., from Vancouver.	
1, Helene, German str., from Swatow.	
1, Kalgan, British str., from Chefoo.	
1, Nyanza, British str., from London.	
1, Sicilia, British str., from Foochow.	
1, Taming, British str., from Manila.	
2, Chenan, British str., from Shanghai.	
2, Clara Jebson, Ger. str., from Swatow.	
2, Fumi M., Jap. str., from Singapore.	
2, Mongolia, Am. str., from San Francisco.	
2, Prosper, Nor. str., from Chinkiang.	
2, Sark, Norwegian str., from Newcastle.	
2, Shansi, British str., from Chefoo.	
2, Shoshu Maru, Jap. str., from Swatow.	
2, Singan, British str., from Haiphong.	
2, Taikosan Maru, Jap. str., from Moji.	
2, Taishun, Chinese str., from Shanghai.	
2, Tientsin, British str., from Chinkiang.	
2, Tingsang, British str., from Chinkiang.	
3, Empire, British str., from Yokohama.	
3, Feiching, Chinese str., from Tsingtau.	
3, Hailan, French str., from Hoihow.	
3, Haiyang, British str., from Coast Ports.	
3, Holstein, German str., from Haiphong.	
3, Hongkong, French str., from Hoihow.	
3, Kenkou Maru, Jap. str., from Moji.	
3, Minas de Batan, Am. str., from Manila.	
3, Yuensang, British str., from Manila.	
4, Ernest Simons, Fr. str., from Shanghai.	

4, Gregory Apar, Br. str., from Moji.
4, Kansu, British str., from Chinkiang.
4, Kiangping, Chinese str., from Chinkiang.
4, M. Korner, German str., from Samarang.
4, Paklat, German str., from Bangkok.
4, Rubi, British str., from Manila.
4, Sydney, French str., from Marseilles.
4, Wakamatsu M., Jap. str., from Wakamatsu.
4, Wongkoi, German str., from Bangkok.
4, Wosang, British str., from Wuhu.
5, Bourbon, French str., from Saigon.
5, Den of Oigl, Br. str., from Shanghai.
5, Hong Wan I, British str., from Amoy.
5, Inverio, British str., from Manila.
5, Knivsberg, German str., from Hoihow.
5, Kowloon, German str., from Mororan.
5, Nord, Norwegian str., from Wakamatsu.
5, Onsang, British str., from Java.
5, Yatshing, British str., from Shanghai.
5, Yerimo Maru, Jap. str., from Moji.
6, C. Diederichsen, Ger. str., from H'phong.
6, Chowtai, German str., from Bangkok.
6, Delhi, British str., from Bombay.
6, Haitan, British str., from Swatow.
6, Indrawadi, British str., from Foochow.
6, Kiukiang, British str., from Shanghai.
6, Prinz Sigimund, Ger. str., from Sydney.
6, Toonan, Chinese str., from Shanghai.
6, Wakamiya Maru, Jap. str., from Bombay.
7, Amara, British str., from Hongay.
7, Bujo Maru, Jap. str., from Moji.
7, Deucalion, British str., from Singapore.

DEPARTURES.

31, Fooching, British str., for Shanghai.
31, Haldis, Norwegian str., for Wuhu.
31, Hanyang, British str., for Shanghai.
31, Ichang, British str., for Wuhu.
31, Locksun, German str., for Swatow.
31, P. E. Friedrich, Ger. str., for Shanghai.
31, Prinz Waldemar, Ger. str., for Sydney.

January:—

1, Ajax, British str., for Shanghai.
1, Amigo, German str., for Hoihow.
1, Chihli, British str., for Haiphong.
1, Germania, German str., for Quinhon.
1, Haiching, British str., for Swatow.
1, Loongsang, British str., for Manila.
1, Pheumpenh, British str., for Saigon.
1, Suruga, British str., for Foochow.
2, Asia, American str., for San Francisco.
2, Chowfa, German str., for Bangkok.
2, Hanoi, French str., for K. C. Wan.
2, Sicilia, British str., for London.
2, Zafiro, British str., for Manila.
3, Huichow, British str., for Samarang.
3, Tjipanas, Dutch str., for Batavia.
4, Hong Wan I, British str., for Amoy.
4, Kwongsang, British str., for Shanghai.
4, Meefoo, Chinese str., for Shanghai.
4, Pongtong, German str., for Bangkok.
4, Sydney, French str., for Shanghai.
5, Batoum, British str., for Balik Pappan.
5, C. Apar, British str., for Singapore.
5, Chiyuen, Chinese str., for Shanghai.
5, Ernest Simons, French str., for Europe.
5, Fausang, British str., for Hongay.
5, Haiyang, British str., for Swatow.
5, H. Rickmers, Ger. str., for Bangkok.
5, Progress, Norwegian str., for Moji.
5, Ragnar, Norwegian str., for Rajang.
5, Signal, German str., for Swatow.
5, Taming, British str., for Manila.
6, Antiochus, British str., for Singapore.
6, Choyssang, British str., for Shanghai.
6, C. Jebson, German str., for Haiphong.
6, Empire, British str., for Australian Ports.
6, Esang, British str., for Shanghai.
6, Hailan, French str., for Pakhoi.
6, Hangchow, British str., for Amoy.
6, Hongkong, French str., for Haiphong.
6, Singan, British str., for Haiphong.
6, Taiwan, British str., for Saigon.
6, Waishing, British str., for Shanghai.
7, Delhi, British str., for Shanghai.
7, Den of Oigl, British str., for Hamburg.
7, Feiching, Chinese str., for Shanghai.
7, Fri, Norwegian str., for Saigon.
7, Holstein, German str., for Haiphong.
7, Keongwai, German str., for Bangkok.
7, Triumph, German str., for Haiphong.
7, Wakamatsu M., Jap. str., for Moji.
7, Yochow, British str., for Shanghai.

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